

















THE  
SHARP SPEAR & FLAMING SWORD  
OF  
POLITICAL JUSTICE

UNSHEATHED AND FEARLESSLY WIELDED IN EXPLAINING  
POLITICAL PRINCIPLES, IN CUTTING UP WHIG AND TORY  
PRANKS, AND ESPECIALLY IN DISCUSSING THE GREAT IRISH  
QUESTIONS OF THE DAY,

ADDRESSED IN THE FORM OF LETTERS,

*to*  
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JOHN. S. MILL, Esq.,  
RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI,  
RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE,  
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BY

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## P R E F A C E.

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ONE of the primary purposes of the composition and publication of the following public Letters, is, to exhibit to general readers some interesting examples of the Literary Art of Free Discussion and of Fearless Criticism, applied by an independent British Citizen, to the Parliamentary conduct of great popular Statesmen, and to the character of important political measures;—to those great public measures which are now engaging national attention. Another principal object of the Letters addressed to the greatest Statesmen in Britain through the Press, is, to enable professional Politicians and practical Legislators who may peruse them, to observe and comprehend that, the knowledge of political principles and governmental procedure is not now confined within the walls of the two Houses of Parliament, but is daily spreading more and more, far and wide, while it is gradually becoming more reproductive, and, consequently, more efficient for the progressive purposes of Liberal legislation. An additional leading aim of the following Letters is, to demonstrate the rapid growth of Democratic principles, as well as the urgent necessity for their practical application to the pressing wants of the present age, and more especially to the existing condition of Ireland. And while illustrating these *purposes, objects, and aims*, fully and fearlessly, it became necessary to review the past political career, as well as to analyze the apparent motives and actual movements of some of our leading Statesmen, and to criticise their actions with a sincere severity, and a freedom of style,—it is believed,—never before attempted by any public writer,—at least, never displayed in Britain, since the days of the famous “Junius.” It is highly satisfactory to know, that some of our greatest Statesmen are happy to think that a brighter day is dawning for Ireland, as well as that Justice to this long neglected country is no longer the declaration or watchword of a party, but the expression of the will of the Empire, founded on a conviction of a sound and generous, but no longer exclusive policy. Our greatest Statesmen feel there is one question which has a prominent claim upon our notice, our care, and our most patient and determined energies,—I mean the settlement of the great question of the Irish Church. I think that, apart from any difference of opinion that may exist among the Representatives of the people, everyone will agree that those who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of settling such a question are bound to allow no secondary objects to interfere with the progress of that question towards a satisfactory conclusion. All minor questions, I hope, will be separated from the struggles of party strife, and, if party contests are



wished for, it may be that on that one wide field before our Statesmen they shall find enough to satisfy the keenest appetite. That the Irish Church will be disestablished and disendowed is certain, but to what length the disendowment of the Ecclesiastical Corporation will be carried is not yet so satisfactorily known. The disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Protestant Church will form the fourth struggle in which the friends of freedom have been busy during the last forty years. It is just nearly so long,—for it was in the year 1829,—since the Great Man-killer, the Iron Duke, who had baffled the power of the wholesale murderer NAPOLEON,—surrendered at the people's call, and our Roman Catholic fellow-men were freed from the political thralldom of ages. A very few years afterwards the Great Lords who had ruled the Nation since the days of DUTCH WILLIAM were put gently aside. The Nation took,—in a measure,—to ruling itself. Again, it was on a winter's evening, now some twenty-three years ago, that the third great change came. Sir ROBERT PEELE then rose in the House of the Common men, and, fore seeing the doom which was awaiting class legislation, proclaimed, that the commerce of the British Islands and their belongings was to be thenceforth free. That was the way the first mighty shot was fired in the great crowning battle of the grand Free Trade struggle.

The Irish difficulty severely tested and tried this Session, as far as it has gone, the talents and temper of political parties, and afforded the true Liberals the most important opportunity for exerting their proper and powerful influences. So much has recently been said about what the people of Ireland do or do not demand,—about what would, or would not satisfy them, that it is emphatically essential to have a free fearless discussion upon Irish questions which shall bring out the whole facts of the case, as observed and comprehended by men of all parties. Every intelligent reader of British history must ascribe the principal part of the wretchedness of Ireland to the operation of the ferocious penal laws formerly imposed upon the Roman Catholic population of this beautiful country, for the avowed purpose of impoverishing them, and keeping them down,—bound fast,—in the chains of political degradation. The change from the old system to the new belongs to our own times, but the mere removal of harsh enactments has not been yet sufficient to enable the people of the country to right themselves. The present occasion is ripe for action. The British Parliament can no longer refuse to deal with the Irish difficulty, nor can Britain afford, in the face of Europe, to rest satisfied with the ignoble quackery which has been the shame of her legislation. From the reign of HENRY II to that of ELIZABETH, the English hold upon Ireland was a mere harry and foray,—a matter of pillage and ravage. Queen ELIZABETH, or her deputies, set the religious persecutions afoot which in one shape or another have lasted till our own time. The TUDORS crushed the Irish with the mailed hand; the STUARTS



turned the lawyers loose upon them to back the soldiers; and the House of BRUNSWICK passed and upheld many "penal statutes" touching the Irish people which are not now pleasant reading to a just man. With all these old historic wrongs, Mr. GLADSTONE,—such is the character of his mind,—can feel as though he had himself seen the wrong done. Again, there is injustice which touches a man's pocket, and injustice which wounds his feelings and saddens his spirit. There is insult as well as injury; and, of the two, insult is probably the harder to bear. Mr. GLADSTONE would feel injustice of this kind more readily than any other living Statesman, and could, without much anxious study, see at once that a man who is wounded in his religious feeling is necessarily and gravely hurt. The wrong, according to the cant word of the day, may be little more than a "sentimental grievance," but it is a bitter thing for a man to be aggrieved in his Moral Sentiments. The grievance of the Irish Church in our own day is mainly one of such a kind. Mr. GLADSTONE'S quick, impulsive nature, though it may be a source of weakness to him for certain purposes, is here his strength. Were his own religion put to shame, he would feel the shame keenly; and so he can feel for others. The question of the loaves and fishes is not the main point at issue when the Irish Church is discussed in our day. Time was when they proved a most fruitful source of misery and bloodshed, but that wrong has had its remedy. When the Protestant clergy openly divided with the Protestant Soil-Lords the fruits of the toils of the Roman Catholic peasants,—What wonder that ill-blood and bloodshed should follow? To speak but the simple truth, in the last century the Protestant clergy in Ireland were too often men of dissolute life and gripping hand. All that has been changed, but the recollection of it remains, and in the mouths of Irishmen it is still bitter as gall. The hour has come for dealing with this great wrong in a decisive style. If the British people would be a united Nation in truth as well as in name, they can afford no longer delay. Let any Protestant who still feels a doubt simply ask himself,—Would he like to be treated by the Roman Catholics as the Roman Catholics are treated by Protestants in Ireland?

Neither the Whigs nor the Tories will move in the right direction if they can help it, and the impulse to go right will most advantageously come from English and Scotch Leaders on the Democratic side. If the Irish Question is to be settled in our time, there must be such a combination of English and Scotch Liberals as to force the subject to a distinct issue, whether the Whig or Tory faction like it or not. Irish members may help most importantly, but the *great and grand work of rescuing Ireland from chronic anarchy and misery must be done for the Irish people rather than by them.* Ireland is misgoverned at the present day,—because she is misunderstood. The British people are not, however, wedded to injustice, nor are they disposed to patronize it. If the British mind could be rightly and



persistently appealed to by the friends and patriots of Ireland,—if the irresistible *Logic of Facts* could be properly employed by the public Press,—the people of Ireland could hopefully look forward to a full measure of long-delayed and much-needed Justice. More men are wanted in Parliament who will devote themselves to this special task of enlightening the people and influencing the public Press. There are a few Irish members who have done good service in this particular line of duty, but their ranks require to be daily strengthened. The Irish people should not be indifferent to the grave crisis that is at hand; for their fortune and their future are now at stake; and although repeated failure has discouraged them, and although disappointment has almost crushed hope in their Brains, they should now rouse themselves to the grand duties of the hour, and boldly accept the challenge flung to them on the one side, and cordially embrace the tender of help offered them on the other. Neither Englishmen nor Scotchmen can defend the wrong which exists in Ireland. If it cannot be defended, let the wrong be made right, and let there be an end of the matter. The people of England and Scotland shall feel, that, let their forefathers have done what they may, the British people of the present day, in their own generation, have striven to bring their Irish fellow-subjects under the rule of equal law. Let the Tories and the Protestant clergy everywhere, take a large view of the question now before the Nation. The very nature of their own faith—the very name they bear—should, as one might suppose, debar them from tyranny of any kind over men's consciences. The doom of the Irish Church is sealed—of that they may be very sure. Let them, in place of fighting the battle out to the bitter end, make the best terms they can, for otherwise they may be sure there will be no mercy or quarter. The change will be sweeping and stern. In the days of Roman Catholic Emancipation, of the first Reform Bill, of Free Trade, there was ever or always a time when the friends of the old state of things might have secured good terms. They would not, however, hear of terms, and the result was surrender at discretion. They should consider, moreover, that the Statesman who is proposing this great change is eminently distinguished by strong religious feeling, and that he is leading religious men. Mr. GLADSTONE is as much attached as any one—more so than most men—to the Church of England. He has, however, the intelligence to understand, and the eye to see, that her cause cannot be helped by upholding wrong. Again, the Irish Church is a source of weakness, not of strength, to the Church of England. It has been said that, when this change is carried out, there will be just such another with regard to Church and State in England. And, no doubt, it will be so when the conditions are the same. Church and State would be separated in England to-morrow, if the Church represented a bare eighth of the population. Whilst the Church represents the people of England, she is safe—not an hour longer. Finally, Reformers



must say, let this change be carried peacefully through, because it will repair the wrongs of centuries; because it will unite two disunited countries, which have everything to gain from union of sentiments as well as of interests; because it is desired by earnest and religious men who would not lightly take in hand such a matter, if contrary to the interests of true religion. The change may be called "A New Way to pay Old Debts," but it is a very good way after all, because it rests upon the simple plan of paying both principal and interest.

The Reform Bill will be worth nothing if it does not bring new and vital powers into the field, and if it does not place in the hands of intelligent men the necessary power to carry out the great Democratic measures which are now required for Ireland, in spite of the resistance of the obstructive classes. The new Reform Bill, if efficiently worked, will give us a few more good speakers on the Liberal side, and a good number of voters. It is sheer delusion, however, to suppose that the Reform Bill which the Tories have granted, places the balance of power in the hands of the majority of the people forming the Nation. The rotten Boroughs and the Soil-Lord-Ridden Counties will keep the minority in the preposterous position of political dictators until the Ballot is secured, and the Soil-Lords will only consent to part with their present assumed power, when they are seriously alarmed at the amount of intelligent determination which the mass of the people will be enabled to exhibit. The opposition to Parliamentary Reform was very bitter as well as prolonged. At one time it took one shape, and at another it assumed a very different guise. Both the Whig and Tory factions resorted to various devices to delay or thwart the national desire, but the resistance to the extension of the Suffrage was not so violent as will be the opposition to those consequences of Political Justice which Democratic changes in our Constitution render ultimately certain. The only way to avert the perils of a prolonged agitation, is, to combine so great a force of public opinion as to alarm the great factions. There shall be no termination of trouble with Ireland, and there shall be no end of annoyance in England and Scotland, if the people are compelled to go through a tedious process of battling for measures which Justice, Intelligence, and Common Honesty would grant at once. Nothing less than a system of complete Justice will remove Irish grievances. If British Statesmen are not prepared and cordially determined to grant Complete Justice to Ireland, let them suppress not only all remedial proposals, but even every form of political discussion. The wrongs of Ireland are now patent to the civilized world; the disaffection of the majority of the Irish people is beyond contradiction. British intelligence has arrived at the crisis when Statesmen must act, or Government must fail; when the true friends of progressive improvement must take their stand, and ensure the speedy application of the remedies which are as necessary to the security of Britain as to the welfare of Ireland. This work, however,



cannot be pursued except upon one principle, and that is *Equality*, social and religious, among all classes. There can be no real freedom where there is the semblance of sectarian domination; there can be no real independence where there is even the tolerated theory of ascendancy. The Catholic must be as free, as independent, as privileged, as the Protestant. He must have the same rights, the same prerogatives, the same social and civil honors, as the classes to which the State has heretofore accorded undue and undeserved favors; and over the whole beautiful land of Ireland the breath of *Equal Liberty* must pass freely, vivifying and fertilizing all it touches, and imparting fresh vigor and bloom to the drooping plants that have so long waited for its benignant advent. The disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church Corporation will constitute a solemn Act of National Equity and Amity, which will be remembered in all time as one of the fairest results of Constitutional Government, and as one of the purest pieces of abstract Human Right that ever came by legislation. The best Reformers of the age do not know that ever yet in the world's history a Legislative Body gathered to receive and to adopt the proposal of a law so splendidly stamped by the spirit of intellectual freedom; so rich in its repentance for old wrong; so earnest in its purpose to "be just and fear not;" so brave, and so progressive, as the measure which will disestablish the Irish Church. Churches have been established by law; while by desuetude, by rebellion, by conquest, by the progress of opinion, they have been disestablished. But there is no precedent for the spectacle of an Ecclesiastical State Corporation judged by those who share its creed, sentenced by its sympathizers, and solemnly executed and put out of legal existence in the name of justice and peace—while words of sincere regret shall mingle with the triumph of a great right greatly done. Happy the land where such deeds of justice are at last possible, where there are Statesmen who have come to understand that religion without concord and equity is an empty word.

Whigs and Tories reckon much upon the *Illogical Character* of British public life, and upon the usual unwillingness of the mass of the people to press on for the completion of the *Legal Recognition* of their Political Rights after a partial compromise has been conceded. The two great factions think that it will be many years before a loud demand springs up for a more equal and just distribution of political power, and they fondly fancy the present general division will enable them successfully to resist organic changes of every kind. There are, however, few of our practical Politicians who now labor under the delusion that British society has reached a fixed stage, and that the growth of Democracy is to have no further influence on the character of our legislation, or on the tone of society. British Democracy is a great and growing fact, and the cry of Justice for Ireland is no longer confined to one side of St. George's Channel. Not one per cent. of Householders who will be Enfranchised by the new Reform



Bill will support a Tory or a Whig policy of dealing with Ireland. The determination will be wide-spread and irresistible, that no sinister interests of Protestant ascendancy or Land-Lord domination shall be allowed to stand in the way of securing for the Irish people the removal of every grievance which they can trace to legislation, or the maintenance of any right to which they can morally lay claim. There can be no danger in being just; and the more deeply the subject is considered the more necessary does it become that all the energies of mind and action in the Liberal party should be employed for the satisfactory solution of the Irish Church question;—for a judicious attack upon the roots of a vicious system, where vast sums are absorbed by grandees and do-nothings, for which there is not the shadow of excuse or justification. The question of the Irish State Church, however, is of great magnitude, and it has so many ramifications that the utmost caution is required in dealing with it, so as to avoid causing a new grievance whilst remedying the old one. The intelligence of the Nation has, however, pronounced it an institution damaging to the cause it professes to serve, and fatal to that mutual good-will and cordial co-operation which ought to subsist between Ireland and the Legislature of the United British Queendom. It is plainly the duty of Parliament to investigate the whole subject in a calm, candid, and judicial spirit. The time has happily passed away when Statutes merely embodied the absolute will of the minority,—when National legislation simply meant the right of might.

A conflict of parties is interesting when it involves either practical legislation or the progress of ideas; but when it consists in a mere war of words, exercising no control over events, it is neither exciting to the public nor creditable to the resisting faction. A minority may often render excellent service, even in defeat; but, to do so, it must have Justice on its side, and contribute to the enlightenment of the Nation if it cannot modify the immediate course of events. Protestant domination, enforced by law, has been tried for generations in Ireland, and has completely failed in weakening the adhesion of the mass of the Irish people to the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, it has been the obvious cause why Irish Catholics have been less liberal than the educated Romanists of France or Italy. We are plainly on the eve of great changes in the organization of Churches. The principle of equality is about to replace that of sectarian domination. This victory of liberty will be a very severe blow to Sectarianism. Nothing benefits a sect so much as persecution that stops short of its extirpation. The Irish Roman Catholic will gain in social comfort, but lose in power, by the removal of a grievance, and the priests will be less to the people when they are no longer associated in their minds with the claims of nationality or the redress of political wrongs. After the Church question comes the Land question, by far the most important one of the two. English dealing with Ireland for many centuries was founded upon confiscation, and it



is no wonder that the Irish people have never consented to methods of land-owning forced upon them by conquest. Up to a very recent period successive British Governments did all in their power to excite hostility between their own supporters and the mass of the Irish people. In the days of EDWARD III an Act of Parliament was actually passed with the avowed object of preventing the growth of goodwill between the two parties by intermarriages, and the employment of foster nurses, both of which were forbidden, and up to the time of Catholic Emancipation the same spirit animated successive Governments. Our task is to reverse all the effects of bad legislation without injustice to any party. If our law has wrongfully given something like absolute ownership to Soil-Lords who were only entitled to a much more limited ownership, we must pay for what we ask them to surrender. The majority of the Irish people are entitled to a prevailing voice in the settlement of local concerns. Where equitable social customs have been maintained, as in Ulster, shooting Soil-Lords or their agents is as rare as in either England or Scotland. The Parliament that shows itself competent to deal with the Irish Church, will, in due time, be fit to settle the relations of Soil-Lord and Tenant. Coercion has been tried in Ireland far too long, and the people must be pacified by giving them, through the Imperial Parliament, all the equitable benefits they would seek from a local legislature, if the Legislative Union should be repealed.

If the people of Ireland were wise enough to sacrifice their religious dissensions and Political differences on the altar of their common country, and to demand as one man the *Legal Recognition* of their Rights by their rulers, their voice would soon be heard, their grievances would be speedily redressed, their wants would be supplied, and their just demands granted. Ireland is naturally blessed with a rich soil, a mild and healthy climate, ample resources for industry in Agriculture, Commerce, and Manufactures, and inhabited by a population equal in physical, intellectual, and moral qualifications to Englishmen and Scotchmen; and yet, with a fertile soil, a thrifty and moral people, Ireland is one of the poorest and most wretched of the Nations of Europe. An average emigration of 70,000 annually is a sad portent in social history, and the inevitable result of a vicious *Land-Code* and of the clearance system. If our British Statesmen and Soil-Lords would contrive to keep the people at home, by giving them adequate employment and equitable remuneration, Ireland would soon have a different state of things. Millions of acres of unreclaimed land, rivers and lakes admirably suited for internal commerce, unworked mines, neglected manufactures, commodious harbors, in which, with a few exceptions, a trading vessel is seldom seen,—form a wide field of enterprise for Irishmen, many of whom have abundance of gold lying idle in banks,—a precious metal, which, although it can neither feed nor clothe human beings itself, is yet almost universally looked upon



as the principal representative of real wealth, and, at the same time, the best measurer of all actual values. While Statesmen and the public Press should steadfastly and earnestly advocate the development of Irish industrial resources, there are three great questions,—the settlement of which is of paramount importance to the British public,—which should constantly engage their best attention. Till the Church Establishment is abolished, and the temporalities converted to useful and National purposes; till the Relations between Soil-Lord and Tenant are satisfactorily adjusted; till secular Education is placed on such a footing as to meet the wants and wishes of the great majority of the population of Ireland,—in a word, till these three great questions are finally settled on the broad principle of *Equal Justice* to all,—Ireland can never expect to be a peaceful, contented, and happy country. These are the canker-worms that prey upon the vitals of the Irish Nation,—that destroy all social union, that impede the physical, intellectual, moral, and political progress of the population. It is high time that the voice of the majority of the people of Ireland should be heard. It is impossible to calculate the benefits that will flow from the annihilation of the State Church Corporation. The removal of this monster grievance will be the first step towards the pacification and prosperity of Ireland. It will break down the barriers which at present divide Sect from Sect. It will enable men to meet on a common platform, and consult for their common interests. It will substitute peace for strife, and brotherly love for social discord; and it will bring into vigorous life those great principles of freedom and equality which are the bulwarks of human happiness. The Irish people ought instinctively to know and appreciate these profound Truths, and they should rouse themselves from their lethargy, unite with the advanced people of England and Scotland, and strike a great moral blow for their own rights. The days of government for the sake of either the Whig or Tory party are passed away, and the Nation must be ruled by the majority of the people, for the interests of the people. If we wish for the political growth of our Nation, we must frankly accept the principle that the majority ought to rule, and that any contrivances which give any sort of minorities any undue power, are to be condemned and uprooted. Upon the all-important question of the pressing wants of Ireland, the national voice is not for this or for that Statesman, not for this or for that party even, but for the Right, the sufficient, and the remedial measures. What the Nation wants, and must have, is not the scheme of any particular section of politicians, but a course of action as regards the grievances of Ireland,—and, above all, as regards the burden and insult of an alien Church,—which will satisfy Ireland, and so far make her reconciled.

The Irish archbishops and bishops are in a very serious state of mind. The billows are rising, and they see the prospect of being submerged in the waves of public opinion. It is not a



pleasant process, to be disestablished and disendowed; for it seems to mean that you are to be deprived of all the consideration and the prestige which law and the instincts of society accord to Ecclesiastical rank, and that you are to die, no priest of yours succeeding; whilst, if you live, you may be, "like the last rose of summer, left blooming alone," without another bishop to keep you in countenance. But the Irish bishops never discuss how Protestant principles are to be extended and diffused amidst a Catholic population; now, however, that the incomes of the priesthood are in danger, they earnestly invoke the aid of the State in order that they may defeat the passing of any measure calculated to end a scandal to religion as well as to political equity. It is this principle of political equity which the bishops cannot comprehend. Toleration they can understand, for they have lived comfortably upon it for nearly seventy years; nor are they strongly disposed to act very harshly towards Catholics who pay the rent-charge and go regularly to their own priest. But that the Catholic, in order to make himself the equal of the Protestant farmer, should be released from payments to the Protestant Church, merely to assert a principle of equality, is what bishops never can be expected to comprehend. And here is that weakness which is the vice of an established religion—it has no sympathy with the people. The order of the priesthood, set apart, remains apart; and, in times of active political thought, takes refuge in old traditional ideas unsuited to the age. An established religion is only a species of Ecclesiastical aristocracy; and, as a consequence, it has been associated with the other aristocracy, whose acts religion is called upon to bless. The bishops, of course, choose to think, and the clergy, who hope to be bishops, are ready to believe, that if they cease to be connected with the State, the State will be given over to his Infernal Highness, the Evil One. Of a free church, the bishops and clergy have no idea, and no prospect, because they have never thought of the people who alone can make a Church, and they fear the people think little of them. It is not unsatisfactory, however, to see the bishops at sea without rudder or compass, for it shows how utterly helpless and hopeless they are; and yet these are the men by whom Faith, Hope, and Charity are professionally preached, whilst they themselves exhibit not any of the qualities of the trustfulness and gentleness which give moral life to humanity. If, to spite the Voluntaries, the Irish Protestants should happen to go forth with nothing in their purses and without shoes to their feet, without State robes, naked and yet not ashamed—then let it be so. It would be the bitter penance for the way in which they have performed their mission. For, as Mr. BRIGHT lately said, the State Church has made Ireland not the most Protestant, but the most Catholic; and not only the most Catholic, but the "most Roman," country in Europe.

Genuine Reformers have never given much weight to the boasts of the Irish Protestants that they were the best, bravest,



most industrious, and most intelligent population on the face of the earth; but Liberal Reformers did believe that, in presence of a great political crisis, they would exhibit more resolution and readiness of resource, greater real firmness and less futile vaunting. They still utter the old and rather toothless defiance, "No surrender!" but what does it mean? "No surrender" of what? They have enjoyed certain exceptional privileges of lordship and titles—will they refuse to surrender these? Will the clerical successor to any one of the "life-interest clergy" retain perforce the church, the parsonage, and glebe? What, then, is the meaning of "No surrender?" When uttered by the brave men of Derry behind their gates, it meant much; and, if a Roman Catholic King besieged Derry again, it might once more be relevant; but when the men descended from the attacked of that day are simply deprived of privileges and moneys which they have long monopolized, the old watchword of mere resistance is singularly out of place. The Protestants of Ireland are a mixed body, about one-half of whom are Anglicans; the remainder being Presbyterians and other Dissenters. Taking these bodies collectively, it is beyond doubt that by them the North has been made the great seat of Irish industry, and a striking monument of Irish commercial success. But when we deal with the Anglican moiety, we deal with a population of about 700,000, a large proportion of whom are landlords, merchants, and professional men, who have fattened for years on the advantages of ascendancy. Since 1838 there has been a lull in Irish anti-Church controversy. Appeased by the partial settlement of that year, the hostility of the Roman Catholic community went to sleep, or was diverted to Municipal Reform, Repeal, and Tenant-right agitations. During that lucid interval the earnest Protestants of Ireland might have done wonders for the internal reformation of their Church and in the judicious surrender of their surplus wealth. They saw sinecures abound. They observed one parish supporting an absentee rector, while another was compelled to starve an overworked curate. There were cathedral dignitaries without cathedrals, archdeacons who had not even "archidiaconal functions" to perform, and well-paid perpetual curates destitute of cures. Nobody stirred to call for the redress of these anomalies and wrongs. The total incomes of the Church were obviously beyond its own needs, and yet they were never applied to anything but the personal support of the Bishops and incumbents. For carrying on the work of trying to "convert" some Roman Catholics in the Far West, the Irish State Church propagandists relied on English liberality, and on matrimonial match-making Bazaars in the North of Ireland. They saw another Protestant denomination—the Presbyterian clergy—starving on a pittance of £40,000 a-year, while for their ministrations to a flock but one-fourth more numerous, the Episcopalians enjoyed about £800,000 a-year, or twenty times the amount begrudged to their neighbors. Yet no minister or member of the State Church



ever said, or thought of saying, "Let us give out of our abundance to our Protestant brethren of other sects." Very small concessions of that kind, made years ago by the Anglican clergy and laity of Ireland, would have appeased polemical rancor and secured them in the safe enjoyment of the residue of their wealth; for nations do not always act quite logically, and anomalous compromises are sometimes wonderfully lucky in their effects. But the Irish Church, strong, as it thought, by virtue of English "No Popery" feeling, disdained all charity, all compromise. It treated with equal contempt the Presbyterian clergy and the Catholics. If the Roman Catholics and Protestants of Ireland should unite in political and public affairs, general legislation for the Emerald Isle will become as easy as it now is for Scotland. The Irish Nation will no longer be a monster with two voices—one cursing and the other begging—but will rise and speak as a single man on all questions which affect the welfare of the island. If, indeed, Irish Protestants were so indignant that with one accord they rushed from churches, parsonages, and glebes, shaking the dust off their feet, and cursing the deceiving and deserting State, there would be a certain spirit and self-denial in the stampede. The Free Church of Scotland originated in that way, on much lighter provocation. But the Irish Church is not equal to anything like that heroic height. It has been too long swaddled in State clothes to walk off without notice and alone. Its limbs are half crippled, not from congenital disease, but through constant leaning on the State crutch. Reformers must still believe that, notwithstanding all the bravado and sulky inaction now displayed in Ireland, the Church, associated so long with cruel persecution, military terror, social disorder, and centuries of crime, will come to the British Parliament no longer "clothed" with State robes, but "in its right mind;" and will tacitly confess its "defeat of fame."

Is not the grievance too time-honored to need much further debate and deliberation? Nor is the grievance known merely within our British boundaries; it is freely discussed on the Continent; and at the moment when Britain's greatest Statesman is bringing forward a measure to redress the wrongs of ages, there is a special interest in recalling what Italy's greatest Statesman thought on the matter. It is now a quarter of a century since CAVOUR summed up Irish history by asserting that the supremacy of a Church odious to the majority of the people was the chief evil of Ireland. He saw clearly, and told us frankly, that our forefathers had worked grievous wrong in Ireland. Besides, it must not be forgotten that the persecution of the Roman Catholics in Ireland ran hand-in-hand with the struggle of the banished STUARTS to win back the crown of the British islands. To the poor Irish, the STUARTS had been hard task-masters, like that second PHARAOH; but the bondsmen were ever held to be on the STUART side. In the stern death-grip at the Boyne, much Roman Catholic blood had been poured out like water; but the sympathies of the people went with the old Kings and the old



Faith. It was a bad business, however ; so let us take CAVOUR's excuse of our forefathers just for what it is worth. For them the excuse may serve, but not for us. We live under the light of clearer thought. We know that we incur heinous guilt in using the name of the ALMIGHTY as a ground for doing wrong to His children. We know what a world of wickedness, of self-seeking, of petty hatred, is mixed up with religious persecution. But, meanwhile, we must keep to the point ; and the point just now is, that the Irish people should be allowed to worship their MAKER in their own way, without let or hindrance from any man. So long as the faith of the huge mass of the Irish people is branded with the mark of dishonor, so long will you never see a peaceful or contented people on this side of St. George's Channel. Let us, then, take away all reproach from the British Parliament and the British name in Ireland ; let us do justice to the Emerald Isle—and, if you will, even more than justice ; let Ireland be known as the country in all Europe that is governed most wisely, most mercifully ; and when Mr. GLADSTONE's proposals shall become law, we shall not have much more to do. There is very little intelligence, wisdom, or truth in the terrible hubbub raised by those nervous bigots who tell us there will be no peace in Ireland until the “ Have-nots ” have cut the throats of the “ Haves ” and seized on their lands. The forefathers of most of us have been knocked on the head by somebody or other ; and if this sort of thing is to be begun, let everybody kill everybody, and there will be a little peace—but not till then. Such, however, is not the course of human affairs. Let us do justice,—that is, practically apply the principles of Justice to all the arrangements of society,—and we may with some solid confidence leave ultimate results in higher hands.

THE AUTHOR.

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# THE SHARP SPEAR & FLAMING SWORD

OF

## POLITICAL JUSTICE UNSHEATHED, &c.

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### L E T T E R I.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
February 14th, 1868.

JOHN BRIGHT, ESQ., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—In the House of the Common men last Thursday evening Mr. DISRAELI explained the salient features of the Bill devised by the Government to provide a satisfactory tribunal for the trial of controverted elections, and to furnish a more efficacious mode of suppressing bribery and corruption. I think with you that the Ballot would be an almost infallible specific.

For some weeks past,—probably, I may say, for months,—Mr. DISRAELI has virtually acted as the head of the Government; since, although Lord DERBY has not avoided the inevitable duties and responsibilities of his office, it is the Chancellor of the Exchequer who has been held answerable in Parliament, and the policy of the Ministry is mainly imputed to his leadership. In that respect the current week as little differs from last week, or last month, as it probably will from next week. I am simply looking forward to probabilities, without reference to any fixed date. Nor would the resignation of the chief office in the State (which may be probably soon arranged so as to excite the greatest possible *Sensation*, and delay the meditated Irish debate until some share of the intense interest felt in it may subside) necessarily imply a complete close to Lord DERBY's political career. Older men than he,—the iron Duke of WELLINGTON, for instance, and Lord LANSDOWNE,—have done the State much service as Ministers without portfolios, or as unofficial advisers of the Crown; and Lord RUSSELL, once Lord DERBY's colleague and friend, and more recently his rival, has indicated in his Irish pamphlet, that he readily yields the front place to a younger man. The state of Lord DERBY's health, and the important character of the business that must come before Parliament during the present Session, would appear to necessitate immediate changes in the Cabinet,—about which speculation has been of late extremely rife. Even if the Great Aristocratic Tory Premier had been in a more vigorous condition, a purely Tory Administration must soon have come to an end, and the question of what sort of a Cabinet can succeed in maintaining office cannot be finally settled, until the new registers are in operation, and the first Reformed Parliament meets. The Irish difficulty is the one which will most severely test and try this Session the temper of political parties, and offers to the true Liberal section the most important opportunity for exerting a powerful influence which they have had for many years. The two aristocratic factions would, no doubt, be glad to make up their quarrels, if they saw their way to a combination which would indefinitely postpone all far-going measures, and leave the Nation to jog on in the old ruts. On both



sides there are, as you well know, men who will not or cannot move with the progress of the times,—gouty-minded individuals, who will operate as a dead weight, or a testy obstruction; but both sides, likewise, have members of more discretion, who will give up resistance as soon as they are convinced that it is vain.

Ireland may be made this Session a test for politicians. Those who will boldly attack the “Land System,” and the “State Church,” may be relied upon for other measures of a really Liberal description, while those who cannot be made to assail *Soil-Lordism* in Ireland will be found very poor Reformers in many other directions. For some time past the organs of that section of the rich middle class which is systematically opposed to all organic and beneficial change, have never lost an opportunity of endeavoring to weaken your great influence, or of assailing any public man of importance who has effectually supported you in proposing to originate a class of yeomen proprietors of Irish soil. The Liberals of the Nation have been accustomed to witness a similar policy for many years past, as in the silly circles of the fashionable world Liberal opinions have not flourished, and no small portion of drawingroom and Club influence has been systematically exerted on the meanest and most ignorant side of every question that has been in dispute. The principal vice of the British system has been, that a large mass of wealth and conventional respectability has perpetually stood between the mass of the people and any good thing that great statesmen or profound thinkers might devise. The Reform Bill will be worth nothing if it does not bring new and vital powers into the field, and if it does not place in the hands of intelligent men the power to carry out great measures in spite of the obstructive classes. What the cleverer sort of untrustworthy politicians want may be seen from the address which Mr. Lowe has just issued to the graduates of the London University, who will be electors under Lord DERBY’S Reform Bill. This peculiar gentleman pretends to think that more really Liberal and enlightened measures might have been obtained without the new Reform Bill than with it, but he is willing to accommodate himself to circumstances, and make the best of a progress which he could not prevent. After professing a few intelligent opinions, he comes to the Irish questions, and consents to abandon and abolish the Irish State Church;—well done Mr. Lowe;—but he thinks the social and economical evils of the country “cannot be remedied, and may easily be aggravated, by legislative interference with contracts between private parties acting with full knowledge.” Circumstances may easily squeeze a politician of the Lowe type into a very different mode of explaining “Tenant Right,” or of alluding to the plans which much better men have put forward for dealing with Irish land; but Mr. Lowe stands forward as a specimen of the sort of tool or implement which the aristocratic factions are glad to use, as they tried to use him last Session to obstruct Reform. They were, however, not very lucky in their choice of an agent, or in the character of his advocacy, which damaged them beautifully; but it is worth while, as one of the signs of the times, to note what he is now about. Lord STANLEY is a politician of a very different character and position. He is not an unscrupulous political adventurer, but the heir of a peerage and of a great estate,—one of our hereditary rulers and a prospective possessor of a vast tract of the Nation’s public property. His intelligence pulls him one way and his position or artificial nobility drags



him in another. As regards the Irish land question, he will be Tory up to the point of defeat; but if he sees that Liberal opinions must triumph, he will rather go with them than be left behind. What Mr. DISRAELI really thinks at present upon public questions it is very difficult to say. He began as a rampant Democrat, and turned Tory to get on. He always looks upon political life as a game to be won, rather than as a duty to be performed. No doubt he is a higher stamp of man than Mr. LOWE, but he has no conception of devotion to principles from honest conviction that they are just and true. He is, however, more squeezable than Lord STANLEY, because he is not clogged by family ties.

On the Whig side there are statesmen amenable to Liberal pressure. The Duke of ARGYLE, for example, has enough sense to shape his course so as to accord with a strong popular current; and Lords CLARENDON and GRANVILLE, though no friends to real Reform, would bend to circumstances rather than be left out. Practically, the composition of a strong Cabinet and the position of two great factions will depend upon the extent to which the true Liberals will combine. If they make themselves strong by cordial union, they can carry Mr. GLADSTONE with them, and that should be their special aim. The new Reform Bill, will, if decently worked, give us a few more good speakers on the Liberal side, and a dozen or two more voters. Already with YOURSELF, MILL, FAWCETT, FORSTER, and a few more who might be named, the true Liberal party have the balance of debating power in their hands; and whenever Mr. GLADSTONE joins the true Liberals they will be irresistible in argument, however they may be temporarily out-voted by factious combinations. You have rendered enormous service by taking the lead in Irish questions. In the main, your opinions on those subjects are shared by all the philosophical Liberals, as well as by the rank and file of Democracy, and it ought to be quite practicable to make such a combination of English, Irish, and Scotch Liberals as to negotiate effectively with the aristocratic factions, who will still retain a most unjust and unconstitutional amount of power. The Liberals should organize themselves forthwith into a party with a definite policy, the foremost article of which should be to insist upon a Democratic settlement of the Irish questions without delay. A determination to break up any Cabinet that will not agree to the removal of the Irish State Church, and to measures for the establishment of a yeomanry proprietary, should be the key-note of this performance. If this victory is won, not only will better days soon come for Ireland, but power will have been gained for an host of English and Scotch Reforms. The change from aristocratic to democratic in Britain requires good faith and boldness to make it safe. If beneficial measures are promptly passed, the educated classes in Britain and the owners of property will be in harmony with the masses, and our social system will be safe; but if delay and disappointment are permitted to follow what is called Parliamentary Reform, then it needs no remarkable powers of prophecy to predict that serious perils will supervene. The people are justified in the belief that a great advance in national prosperity may be speedily attained by establishing a National Government in the place of the class domination under which Britain has struggled so long, and for which she has paid the tremendous price of the most enormous debt in the world, the delay of Education, and a crop of pauperism such as no other rich and civilized country can show.



The people forming the Nation cannot expect the great families now holding the public property of the State,—the national lands,—to consult together how they may destroy their own pernicious influence. If they consult at all, it will be how to sustain it as long as possible in opposition to the spirit of the age. An artificial aristocracy takes the leading places; but it never leads in any onward march. Therefore, only temporary and slight importance can be attached to any immediate arrangement consequent upon Lord DERBY'S incapacity to continue an active life. The Liberals can, if they are judicious, take advantage of the difficulties of the two great factions, and lay down conditions on which alone office can be held. Earl RUSSELL will, no doubt, follow his usual course of talking to some extent liberally out of office; but it is time to bid him a respectful farewell, with thanks for any past service, and a polite refusal to place him again in power. Younger and more vigorous men are needed in transition times, and his inveterate aristocratic assumptions and insolent conceit are passing out of date. Temporarily, let the Tories patch up their Cabinet how they like; but when we get a new House of the Common men, we must insist upon the great families admitting into the Administrations a fair proportion of men who do not belong to their order, and who represent views and interests of a much wider kind. While the chief offices of Government are filled with members of aristocratic families, mixed with an occasional individual sprung from the middle class, but perverted by education and the mischievous influences to which he has been exposed, great Reforms need not be expected. Organic changes in army, navy, law, pauperism, and finance require the elevation into the highest posts of public life, of a class of men hitherto excluded from them by the selfish arrogance of a few families. The great Mr. COBDEN was right in refusing office under Lord PALMERSTON. He would have been swamped in such a Cabinet and under such a leader. Men of high talent and true popular stamp ought only to join Administrations under fair conditions. Their strength consists in the Truth of the principles they represent, and if they undertake to act with others, it should be on the condition that those principles are to prevail. There are some subjects on which I differ widely from you; but at the present moment you stand out honorably and proudly as Britain's foremost representative man in the chief questions which agitate the public mind. The true Liberal party will, if it is worth anything, do its duty by you and force you into power. Sincerely wishing that you may be long and sufficiently sustained by the unwavering confidence of the British people, whose highest expectations your talents and devotion to their cause have excited.

I am, dear Sir, yours most cordially in the conquering cause of human progress,

JOHN SCOTT.

## L E T T E R    I I .

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
February 18th, 1868.

JOHN BRIGHT, ESQ., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—The Scotch Reform Bill was introduced on last evening, and the Irish one is to make its reluctant appearance on the 9th of March. Two successive Ministries have declared that the representation of Scotland ought to be increased. In 1866 Mr. GLADSTONE insisted that the right was irrefragable; that, with reference either to population or property, the Northern Queendom did not possess a fair share of political power. What, then, shall be the final character of the Scotch and Irish Reform Bills?

After Lord STANLEY's Bristol speech it was very desirable that some great and trusted leader of the true Liberal party should boldly reiterate the demands which the people of England and Scotland make on behalf of the Irish Nation. Lord STANLEY, though possessing the intellect and education of a statesman, is the heir to a Tory Peer, and one of the leading members of a Tory Administration. As a statesman, he would say one thing, but as a party politician he must say another. If all the aristocratic influences of corruption, which lower the tone of public morals in Britain, were swept away, party divisions would still exist, and Government by party might still be carried on. The difference would be that parties would be founded, not upon family interests, but upon personal convictions; those who agreed in principle would combine for action, and as men who differ widely upon some questions, agree cordially upon others, the composition of parties would fluctuate according to the kind of work that had to be done. The aristocratic system, as you are well aware, divides the chief power of Parliament between two sets of great families, always ready to subordinate Truth, honesty, or national interests to their own narrow claims. A STANLEY can be a Liberal, or a Tory, just as the exigencies of family interests require. A RUSSELL can be a supporter of the Ballot,—as Lord JOHN was at the time just preceding the passage of the Reform Bill,—a Liberal on Church questions, or a Tory on the Suffrage, just as BEDFORDS, CAVENDISHES, and other Whig organisms think proper to decide. All this is very disgusting, and lowers faith in public men. A few years ago Lord STANLEY would have been regarded as one of the most likely statesmen to have cut the knot of Irish difficulty by measures of sterling Justice. Just now he lags with his Tory party, and is ready to prostitute his intellect to devise the arguments they require, to exhibit some grounds why wrongs should be maintained. To-morrow, matters may change,—the Tories may think it advisable to out-bid their opponents, and “dish the Whigs” upon the Irish question, as they did on that of Reform. But neither faction will move in the right direction if it can help it, and the impulse to go right will most advantageously come from English and Scotch leaders on the Democratic side. If the Irish question is to be settled in our time, there must be such a combination of English and Scotch Liberals as to force the subject to a distinct issue, whether the Whig or Tory factions like it or not. Irish members may help most importantly, but the *grand work of rescuing Ireland from chronic anarchy and misery must*



*be done for the Irish people*, rather than by them. Indeed, if we wait for the consummation by the latter method, we should need the thousand years of Methuselah to have any probability of seeing the end.

You very properly ascribe the principal part of the wretchedness of Ireland to the operation of the ferocious penal laws formerly imposed upon the Roman Catholic population of that country, for the avowed purpose of impoverishing them and keeping them down in the dust of political degradation. The change from the old system to the new belongs to our own times, and the mere removal of harsh enactments has not been sufficient to enable the people of the country to right themselves. You wisely, I think, discourage the *disunion nonsense*, in which certain parties indulge. "I shall never consent," is your exclamation, "to any measure that would disturb legislative union, till it is proved that in Britain statesmanship is absolutely dead, and till it is proved in Ireland that right and Justice have failed to influence mankind." Now, this is the feeling of all intelligent honest men in Britain, and if the malcontents in Ireland are not wise enough to agitate for specific Reforms instead of getting up seditious clamor for disunion, there is the greater necessity that the true Liberals in Parliament should show them that statesmanship is not dead nor dying, and that Justice has power to produce content. The practical remedies suggested by you are "The abolition of that infamous robbery which the Protestant State Church commits upon the Roman Catholic population, and the origination of a large class of independent farmers, the proprietors of their own farms." Estimating the Irish State Church property at thirteen millions, you asked, "What would be thought in England if a couple of towns like Birmingham demanded such a sum for purposes in which the rest of the nation did not agree?" Clearly, the Protestant minority must be made to give up its hold on this great mass of national property; and if Whig and Tory statesmen do not choose to be the instruments of so just and necessary a change, they must be thrust aside to make way for better and abler men. With reference to methods of originating an independent and industrial landed proprietary in Ireland, you have adverted to the use which could be made of the Ballot in lessening the Soil-Lords' political hold upon the land. You further pointed to a valuable institution in Prussia,—of "Rent Banks"—to advance to tenant-farmers the money required for the purchase of their farms. You also referred to Acts of the Canadian Parliament in purchasing for a million sterling, large tracts of country, for the purpose of selling it in farms of various dimensions. In Prince Edward's Island, only two years ago, a similar process was in operation, and you quoted the Governor's speech, praising a measure which would enable large estates to be purchased for a similar purpose. When shall we have operations like these in progress in Ireland and throughout Britain?

The great majority of the British people would soon settle these great questions in the forthcoming Parliament if they were adequately represented in that assembly. The great principles lying at the bottom of the measures recommended by you are those of obvious justice and public utility, and you can point to the actions of great statesmen in other countries, and to the opinions of great thinkers all the world over, in favor of such plans, to begin with, and pending the resumption of the whole lands by the State; but, How can we compel an aristocratic Government to carry them out? It is a *sheer delusion* to suppose



that the Reform Bill which the Tories have granted places the balance of political power in the hands of the majority. The rotten boroughs and the Soil-Lord-ridden Counties will keep the minority in power, and they will only consent to part with it, when they are seriously alarmed at the amount of intelligent determination which the people exhibit. The opposition to Parliamentary Reform was bitter and prolonged. At one time it took one shape, and another time it assumed a different guise. Both factions resorted to various devices to delay or thwart the national desire, but the resistance to the extension of the Suffrage was not so violent as will be the resistance to those *Consequences of Political Justice* which Democratic changes in our constitution entail. The only way to avert the perils of a prolonged agitation, is to combine so great a force of public opinion as to alarm the great factions. There shall be no end of trouble with Ireland, and there shall be no end of annoyance in England and Scotland, if the people are compelled to go through a tedious process of battling for things which common honesty and decent intelligence would grant at once. Whigs and Tories reckon upon the *Illogical* Character of British public life, and upon the usual unwillingness of the mass of the people to press on for completion after a compromise has been conceded. They think that it will be many years before a loud demand springs up for a more equal and just distribution of political power, and they fancy the present general division will enable them to resist organic changes of every kind. Simple, however, as your propositions appear if Ireland only is considered, their adoption involves the acceptance of principles which would soon take root in English and Scottish soil. The more enlightened Continental Governments have long seen,—what is well known in America,—that the interest of the Nation requires the existence of a numerous and independent body of yeomanry, such as formerly existed in Britain before aristocratic craft and greediness swallowed them up. The aristocratic system demands the accumulation of land in the hands of a few families, and its cultivation by rent-paying farmers, degraded into political serfdom by their Soil-Lords. If the farmer is a serf, the laborer will be only one step above a pauper. The nice gradation of ranks must be preserved, and the aristocratic pinnacle must have a wide basis of popular degradation for its support. Justice to Ireland becomes intelligible when it is understood to mean to remove a grievance like the robbery of the Protestant State Church, and the introduction of a system under which agricultural prosperity becomes a possible thing. It may be said that Ireland is better off than she was some years ago, and yet her discontent seems on the increase. The first part of this proposition is true. The worst condition of Ireland dates some years back; but political discontent never conforms with close accuracy to national wretchedness. Revolutionary feelings are scarcely ever prevalent unless great wrongs exist, and considerable discontent prevails; but it is not uncommon to find outbursts of revolution when the worst is over, and some improvement has begun. Statistics may show that Ireland was more starved and pinched at a past date than at the present hour; but no Englishman or Scotchman returns from a visit to Ireland without bringing home with him abundant evidence that the inhabitants are not sufficiently well fed, well clothed, and well housed to be a contented people. The men, however, who speak of, and encourage the demand for disunion, act rashly and untruthfully when they say that only a local Parliament can deal effectively with



Irish wrongs. It would be far more true to make the very opposite assertion,—that no local Parliament, but only an Imperial one, can legislate as the occasion requires. The Irish people, or at least a certain portion of them, are foolish enough to believe this sort of nonsense. Demagogues have been long accustomed to fool them with such stuff. You propose the cure for this delusion. It is for the British Parliament to do what is right, and when the Irish people see it, they will be convinced.

In the meantime the reconstruction of the Cabinet is drawing nigh ; and the question presents itself,—Who is to be Lord DERBY's successor ? As usual there are three courses open to the Tories ; they may nominate some amiable artificial nobleman of high rank, under whose name rival statesmen might unite ; they may invoke Lord STANLEY to take his father's place ; but the gathering storm has had something to do with Lord DERBY's protracted illness ; or Mr. DISRAELI,—the fearless, the reckless Chancellor of the Exchequer,—may be promoted to be Prime Minister of Britain. The experiment, however, of a nominal Premiership is not at all likely to be tried at the present momentous period. The day is past for ever for Ministries with a purely ornamental figurehead. In the first place, such a man must be in the gilded House of the Lords, and in itself, as the Nation learned from bitter experience, that is a most sweeping objection, which even under men like Lord ABERDEEN, Lord RUSSELL, and Lord DERBY, was sensibly felt and painfully regretted. That the Premier ought to be in the House of the Common men, is a general rule, laid down by the Duke of WELLINGTON, in 1834, and every year confirms the wisdom of the iron man's decision. The fate of the Ministry is always in the hands of the representatives of the people, and a Premier defending himself by deputy, if not, like the absent, "always wrong," is at least often wronged. Even if there are exceptional cases where the Nation reluctantly accepts a First Minister in the Upper House of the hereditary law-makers, still it would be too bad if the Nation at present had to put up, not only with a Peer, but with a purely ornamental Peer ; a *Semi-State Idol* of that kind will find few worshipers in the present day. As to Lord STANLEY, those who are inventing his candidature for the Premiership can hardly have considered the facts of our present position. He is in the House of the Common men, it is true ; but,—What does that imply ? Now, everybody knows that the task of leadership not only requires a peculiar ability, a share of which Lord STANLEY may no doubt possess, but that it involves a very unusual amount of hard work, which increases year by year. I doubt whether any of our public men could combine its duties with those of the Foreign Office. If this were possible, Lord STANLEY, one of the most industrious statesmen of our time, could accomplish the feat ; but, in such a duplicate position, even he, I believe, would be overtasked. He might, of course, if made Premier, resign the inferior office ; but, in the interests of his Tory party,—I may, without flattery, add, the interests of the Nation at the present juncture,—Would that be wise ? The strong point of the present Ministry is its conduct of foreign affairs ; and there are several almost tangled threads of negotiation, which it would be injudicious to take from Lord STANLEY's cool and steady hands, to place under the charge of some new official. It is obvious, however, that there are other objections hardly less effective. Lord STANLEY has served for years under the leadership of Mr. DISRAELI ;



Why, then, should he be suddenly called upon to supersede his chief? Of course, I can understand motives muttered rather than freely spoken out. Lord STANLEY is a man of high descent,—a man of gentle blood,—a member of the territorial aristocracy; and there may be country gentlemen, titled and untitled,—nick-named and unnick-named,—who would prefer his leadership, because, whatever may be his opinions, or his personal parts,—he is by family “one of themselves:” while Mr. DISRAELI is only a man of genius, whose foreign ancestry may be old enough, but who as a squire in Bucks, is merely a green production of yesterday. These are considerations not so much to be expressed or explained away as to be felt; and there was a time when, no doubt, they would have had weight. But that time has gone by. The great territorial school has not been opened so many years without the schoolmaster’s attaining an influence that his pupils cannot put aside. Twenty years ago they preferred him to “one of themselves;” since then he has borne the burthen and heat of the day. He has finally led them to the pleasant pastures of official, if not of political success, and it would be extremely odd if they were to accept the result of his twenty years’ work, and then claim the right of electing a new leader to wear the laurels he had won. True Liberals must all sympathize with the fact of Mr. DISRAELI’s success in breaking down aristocratic barriers too rude and barbarous for our times. It is a pity that the coming victory is not going to be won by a man of a higher tone of character and with a loftier perception of duty. No one can believe that Mr. DISRAELI’s career has been founded upon firm convictions of what was right. He has never shown much Political Conscientiousness.

Mr. DISRAELI, then, will be the Prime Minister of Britain. These words mean a great deal. There is something in this fast-coming fact worthy of very careful consideration. I have contended against him in politics with a persistency of which the readers of my various political publications are well aware; I have fought him and his Tory party “from morn to dewy eve;” he and his have struck hard against “The Truth,” and I have returned blow for blow, sometimes, I sincerely hope, “with interest:” but I do not deny that there is in his career that which attracts even sworn enemies like myself. The Premiership of Britain is a great prize; to win it, to hold it, a man must certainly have a rare combination of gifts. He must physically have a vitality of constitution that can contend against hard toil and late hours; mentally, he must have resources ready for use at any moment and on all occasions. He must not only be a fluent speaker, but a rapid thinker; he must not only win the confidence of about four hundred gentlemen,—the working majority of the House of the Common men,—but of over a dozen clever men members of both Houses, with position and ability enough to fill high places, and yet prepared to accept him as their chief. In Britain, still largely influenced by men of hereditary position and wealth, high birth will, of course, go no small way to make up for deficiencies in some of the necessary qualifications; but the surprise excited by Mr. DISRAELI’s success is, that he had nothing extrinsic in his favor when he started in the race, and had many things against him. There is a strong and still existing British prejudice that no man is clever beyond his own line; and, starting as a writer of fashionable and political “sensation” novels, Mr. DISRAELI was for years best known as the author of “Vivian Grey.” His father was a



literary recluse, and he had no County family at his back ; while the earlier characteristics of his mind seemed an excess of poetical imagination,—an excessive development of IDEALITY,—and a florid luxuriance of speech,—the most essentially “*unBritish*” traits that a public man could display. A judicious friend, advising the young member when he entered Parliament in 1837, might have said,—“Be prosaic, statistical, and clear ; avoid figures of speech, but abound in arithmetic ; be docile to the party whip, and one day you may slide into an *Under-Secretaryship*, and—who knows ?—probably in your old age become President of the Board of Trade.” But Mr. DISRAELI was not prosaic, not statistical, not clear. He “abounded in the contrary sense ;” he was eccentric in his votes and speeches, one day supporting his party leader, and the next contradicting him to his face ; and the result is that he has never been Under-Secretary, and will never be President of the Board of Trade. But if Mr. DISRAELI attains the Premiership, will it be due to his novels, to his eccentricity, to the wild follies of his political youth ? No ; but to the fact that, in spite of errors and absurdities that would have ruined a weaker man,—a man of genius can force his way. I do not believe in him as the statesman of the future ; the true Liberals should to-morrow vote “no confidence” in the Ministry, believing that honest DEMOCRATIC leaders can alone “crown the edifice” with the truest Reforms ; but if Britain is going to have a Tory Administration, the Liberals should like to have it at its best. Let them fight in the light ; let them see their real foe ; let them not have a Premiership by deputy, or Premiership to suit aristocratic susceptibilities. Like the challengers of old, let them ask the Tories to bring forth their best man, and they will fight out the campaign. If the Tories will do so, and I hope they will, it will force the Liberals to unite, and summon to the front their best man ; it will force *him* to do his best ; it will force us all,—leaders and rank-and-file,—to shape out a public policy worthy in every respect of our great cause,—which must soon triumph and prevail.

It is rather too soon to attempt to take a retrospect of Lord DERBY’s performances on the highest political stage ; but though, from my point of view, he did many things he ought not to have done, and left undone many things he ought to have done, yet it may be honestly said, even by his most intense opponents, that “He himself did nothing low or mean on that memorable scene.” Deficient he may sometimes have been in logical foresight and in political calculation of consequences, but he always carried the healthy and distinct individuality of a territorial aristocrat into his politics, and in exerting his obstructive influence on his passive followers it lent him enormous power. Were it not for the successful obviation of obstruction and the overcoming of resistance, we could neither estimate, nor comprehend, nor appreciate the forces and purposes of progression. Were obstacles not levelled and carried before the stream of progress we could have no experience of advancement. Should Lord DERBY regain a measure of his usual strength, his influence, it may be supposed, will not be lost to his friends ; he can return to the House of the Lords refreshed by the removal of that load of fear and hard work which the Premiership imperatively imposes. His debating energy, his aristocratic weight in the House of the hereditary law-makers, may come out with even greater force when, with his mind released from fear and business details, and with improved health, he can resume his place, and in any



fierce fight doubtless remember, as of old, his great swashing blows. I should be sorry to miss him from the opposing ranks, and the greatest Liberal combatant of the day might readily recognize in him a foeman worthy of his sharpest steel. The probable or certain retirement of a conspicuous political leader naturally suggests reflections on his character and influence, as well as on the time during which he has been concerned in public affairs.

Although some slender hopes are entertained that Lord DERBY may regain sufficient strength to be the confidential adviser of his Tory party, his official life may be looked upon as closed, and public attention reverts to the principal incidents of his time-serving career. He will carry with him, on his retirement from office, into private life a very general feeling of true respect and regard. Neither his education,—which was too exclusively superficial,—nor his natural character, resulting from his organization and the influence of his surroundings, fitted him to become a great and a brilliant statesman, but early in his Parliamentary career, and again towards its close, he manifested through the influence of pressure a large-mindedness which will be honorably remembered in the history of his times. Few men of equal intellectual powers, and with similar inducements for their cultivation, learnt so little of the Physical and Economical Sciences, which have become of the highest importance in the management of national affairs. In no one direction could Lord DERBY's admirers claim for him the accurate knowledge or the breadth of thought which characterize a first-class legislator; but a considerable amount of practical sagacity, debating faculties of no mean order, and an influential position as the head of an old aristocratic house, combined to render him one of the most influential men of the time. In early life he belonged to the Liberal side, to which he rendered important service, and he deserves especial credit for carrying the famous measure for National Education in Ireland, so ably explained by the late George Combe. He also carried the Church Temporalities Bill, and the measure for Emancipating West India Slaves. Having advocated Parliamentary Reform, and measures of this description, he ought, in logical consistency, to have remained with the Liberal party; but he took fright at the progress of Liberal ideas, and separated himself from the Whigs in 1834, because he would not consent to a further reduction of the Irish Church Establishment. Aristocratic prejudices, and want of Economic knowledge, led him to become the head of the Protectionist opposition to Corn Law Repeal at a later date, and it was at that time Mr. DISRAELI, who had won a Parliamentary reputation by badgering Sir R. PEEL, assisted Lord GEORGE BENTINCK in organizing an Anti-Free Trade party, and thus prepared the way for his subsequent position in the Tory camp. It was very curious that one of the proudest men of one of the proudest aristocratic houses in Britain should form so strong a friendship as Lord DERBY did for the clever literary man who had turned political adventurer without any other support than what his own genius might afford. Probably no Whig Peer of equal standing would have behaved so well to Mr. DISRAELI as Lord DERBY has done from his first association with him to the present hour; and if the shuffling Whigs have found in the poor son of a Jewish literary man, one of their most formidable and dangerous opponents, they may thank their own narrow-minded exclusiveness for having assisted to place him in such a position. Upon the Reform



question, Lord DERBY acted after the first Bill in conformity with his aristocratic predilections as long as seemed possible, and whatever may have been the influence of mere party feeling in inducing him to take the game out of the hands of the treacherous Whigs, he certainly rendered the Nation a great service by the course he pursued. It is not within my present purpose to write a literary portrait of Lord DERBY or of Mr. DISRAELI, but to advert to a few facts which give a peculiar interest to the prospective retirement of the one and the anticipated promotion of the other. Having passed so many years of his life in obstructing the most useful measures which were brought before Parliament, it is curious that Lord DERBY should have enjoyed so much personal idiotic popularity; but the fact is easily accounted for by the nature of English public life, and the *State-Idol* worshipping character of the British people. Government by party has been accepted as a necessary consequence of the peculiarity of the British Constitution, and the Liberals have justly regarded Lord DERBY as one of the best and most hopeful of their opponents. He has stood before them as a high-minded, generous man, with large excuses of birth, education, and position for being utterly wrong on many important questions; and when he has been disposed to go right, his motives have been respected as well as his plans. The meanness of aristocracy has never been exhibited by Lord DERBY as it has often been shown by some of his Colleagues, and continually by the great Whig houses. As his party was deficient in talent, he was wise in accepting the services of Mr. DISRAELI, and he never tried as the Whigs would have done, to make him a mere degraded tool,—a humiliated instrument of party warfare. The progress of events has made Mr. DISRAELI the most conspicuous man of his party, and I have no doubt, Lord DERBY, when he resigns, will recognize the claims of the author of “Vivian Grey” to the Premiership, and recommend her Majesty to raise him to an honor which, of course, our worthy sister the Sovereign shall be willing to confer.

The future of the Tory party depends very much on Lord STANLEY. He will have to choose soon whether he will accept Liberal ideas, with their inevitable consequences, or whether he will imitate his father, and change from Liberalism to re-action, and throw away his powers and his knowledge, notwithstanding all the pains and expense I have been at to give him political knowledge from time to time, during the last ten years. The times are very trying to members of aristocratic houses; for, whatever may be avowed, almost every political conflict is a portion of the great fight between *Pampered Privilege* and *Robbed Democracy*, which will not cease for many years. Though in many respects inferior to his father, Lord STANLEY is much better acquainted with modern Social Science, and Social Philosophy, and much better able to judge what changes of opinion necessarily result from national progress,—from the incessant labors of the press. The time is passed when the people will submit to be dealt with as children, and ruled by others, who claim the privilege of guiding them. Popular rule tends to break up the old forms of party Government, and the next Parliament will probably contain a larger proportion than we have yet had of men who will vote on what they think the most Equitable side. The Tories, as least given to original thinking, will be most easily kept together in political companies, moving according to command; but they will be less numerous than the Liberals, and liable to overthrow



whenever they cannot get Liberal help. Without the flexible and shuffling dexterity and cunning pranks of Mr. DISRAELI they would soon lose their glittering importance. With his aid, if they have the sense to be tractable, they may swallow more and more of their own *stale principles*, and grow strong upon the easily digestible diet. There is not a single public question of any importance that admits of a genuine Tory solution at the present moment; nor can any Tory Administration stand, except by giving effect to the ideas of its opponents. Mr. DISRAELI probably rejoices at this fact. He has not the stupid head required for a genuine Tory, and will, if sufficiently pressed, continue to *educate* his party if they are susceptible for further cultivation. Some of the aristocratic noodles are highly indignant at the prospect of being put under the command of a successful middle-class man, who has risen in political life by his own talents, and who has not even a matrimonial connexion with any one of the great glittering families. This feeling will, no doubt, give rise to great difficulties, and unless Lord DERBY gains health enough to keep his Tory party in order, the prospective Premiership of Mr. DISRAELI will terminate in a conspicuous split. Sincerely wishing yourself, Mr. GLADSTONE, and all your faithful associates more and more power to carry on your duties, for the benefit of the admiring and expectant multitudes,

I am, dear Sir, your most cordial supporter and co-operator in this great and triumphing cause of Justice to the long down-trodden millions,

JOHN SCOTT.

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### L E T T E R   I I I.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
February 22nd, 1868.

J. S. MILL, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—There is every likelihood, unless some sensational plot may be played by the trembling Tories, that next week will be emphatically an “Irish one” in the House of the Common men. On Mr. MAGUIRE’s motion a debate is expected that will be at once interesting and important, and that may be continued for several nights. It would be really impossible to exaggerate the importance of the forthcoming occasion. The leaders of the two great parties in the State will be expected to indicate the opinions, if not the measures, which the crisis suggests; and, since the subjects are grave enough to involve the fate of Ministries, the course and character of British Politics for generations may be affected by the utterances of our leading statesmen in the ensuing debate. I suppose that it is impossible to say whether there will be a division; but, under any circumstances, the politicians of the Nation will receive from both sides of the House of the Common men a mass of valuable information on the state of Ireland. So much has recently been said about what the Irish people do or do not demand,—about what would or would not satisfy them,—that it is essential to have a free fearless discussion which shall bring out the facts of the case, as seen by men belonging to all parties. The



issues that will be raised on Ireland are also not merely provincial. The State Church and the Land question cannot be kept entirely at this side of the Channel. They will provoke desires, determinations, and thoughts that center round existing British institutions. Statesmen tread on hot ashes, with fire and fury beneath, when they touch on all the points raised up by the suggestions for the settlement of the Irish Church. Whoever proposes the endowment of the Roman Catholic Creed excites the furious "No Popery" cry and provokes the overwhelming wrath of the *fast-progressing* Voluntaryism of Britain; while bold ideas of thorough disendowment arouse the fierce alarm of those who fear for the funds of the Irish State Establishment. Every word let fall on the Irish land question is followed by a shower of quotations from Social Economists of every school; while all the Soil-Lordism of England and Scotland are equally excited at the proposed application to Irish Soil-Lords of measures that may one day soon come home to themselves. Here statesmen have one of the great difficulties of the situation. Hardly any British statesman can discuss it without a mental reservation based on reference to British institutions. Trifling motions and the proposal of petty remedies do a great deal of harm in Ireland as well as throughout England and Scotland, by disturbing the growth of a sound public opinion and distracting worthy men's minds from the practicable remedies of Political Science for the evils that exist. Still, if regular political physicians refuse, or delay to treat the case, or desert the suffering patient, or merely prescribe without seeing that the remedies are promptly applied,—What can we expect but a succession of great field-days next week for the noisy quacks? I must go further than this: I hold not only that trifling motions and petty proposals inflict harm, but that every vague admission by British writers or statesmen, that "*something* must be done," keeps alive an unhealthy simmering of Irish expectation. I would not propose to make it penal for any writer or statesman to say that new and exceptional legislation is required for Ireland; but I do say, and you must be well aware of the fact, that such repeated admissions,—and men of all parties are constantly making them,—when coupled with *continuous inaction*, produce enormous mischief. What should the people of England think of their statesmen if they were found guilty of similar conduct, in the case of any purely English question? Suppose the public writers and statesmen of England had kept on repeating for thirty years that the Corn Laws were an anomaly, and that they ought to be *reformed*,—abolished,—and yet still have left them, year by year, to impede importation and enhance the price of bread,—What would be thought of the fatuity of politicians? Yet, you know, that this is what everybody, from Mr. DISRAELI the adventurer, to Lord RUSSELL the orthodox Whig, has been saying since 1829 about the Irish State Church; and yet there it stands, a monument of conquest, monopolizing the ecclesiastical revenues of Ireland, a distinct burthen on Irish agrarian industry, a source of political irritation, an *unparalleled reproach* to a people *pretending* respect for the rights of others. The inflexible attitude of the old ELDON Tories was intelligible and manly; they held out no hope to Irish Roman Catholics; they declared that the Irish State Church was a very solemn portion of that Divine thing,—of that supernatural concoction,—the British Constitution, and that to touch it would be sacrilege. If all the British people could have adhered to this Tory principle, statesmen should now have to



deal with a clear stern fact, and either the Irish people would accept the situation, or rise up against British rule in a formidable insurrection that would settle the question of mastery for probably some years. But Britain took no such straightforward course. She half-undid the old penal chain,—she allowed the Roman Catholics to practise their religious rites, to enter Parliament, and to take offices; but she still taxed them for the support of an *alien* Church, and still excluded them from the pompous Viceroyalty,—still did everything which she could in a small way to ignore and insult their priests. These facts, indeed, afford the common platform from which the discussion can start. Every one admits that past British legislation inflicted injury on Ireland as a whole, and on Irish Roman Catholics as the majority of the Nation. Everybody, with a few obvious exceptions, admits that Britain should repeal all present laws which impose exceptional disabilities on Irish Roman Catholics.

In 1819, Sir ROBERT PEEL pleaded hard against CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION, on the ground that the CATHOLICS would never be content with the mere right to send members to Parliament,—they would go further, and agitate for the removal of the Protestant Church. And experience has proved PEEL was right in his surmises. Justice cannot be done by quarters or halves; and we may now rest assured that the same Truth will hold good. Nothing less than complete Justice will stop Irish grievances. If British statesmen are not prepared to grant complete Justice to Ireland, let them suppress not only proposals, but even every form of discussion. For every word they utter is now heard by an unusually excited and expectant people. If the Imperial Parliament is not prepared to act out its opinion, reiterated admissions that “something ought to be done,” will only keep alive irritation and that hope deferred that sickens and slays the mental constitution. What should intelligent wise men think of a BOARD of *Surgeons* who kept telling a patient that an operation of some kind was absolutely necessary, and who yet allowed day after day to elapse without doing it. That is the treatment which Ireland,—the “*Sick Man*,”—has received at the hands of the British doctors. Oh, for some adequate authority to call on all intelligent men in Britain to declare whether there is now in the nature of things any just cause or impediment to practical legislation for Ireland! On these facts, I base an argument that Britain should not be content with what she has nearly completed,—the repeal of all Anti-Irish Legislation,—but should, as far as she can, repair the damage done by the penal laws, and undo the still existing effects of former legislation. What, then, do statesmen find in Ireland as the effect of long British rule? The masses of the people are divorced from all ownership or even enduring tenancy of the soil. There are few Soil-Lords professing the national creed. Excepting in some parts of the Province of Ulster, no prosperous manufactures draw off what is termed the surplus population from the land. The agriculture of the country, generally speaking, is poor, and is getting worse year by year; the total yearly value of Irish produce is decreasing; over many districts once yielding crops and supporting many families, Bullocks and Sheep accumulate and men decay. The majority of the people have to support two Churches,—their own and the *alien* Church imposed by British laws. The majority of the people have a Church which the Government persistently ignores. The majority of the people are told by the Tory leader of the House of the



Common men,—the prospective Prime Minister of the British Empire,—that, though inclined to be indulgent, he cannot allow any Irishman who accepts the religious faith of the Nation to fill the highest office in Ireland. Notwithstanding the frequent changes of British Governments, the office of First Minister has, by some curious incident, remained a close monopoly. In two-and-twenty years there have been seven Cabinets, and only four Prime Ministers. Lord DERBY and Lord RUSSELL, both of whom entered public life more than forty years ago, are the only living statesmen who have held the highest office under the Crown. It was probably fortunate for the Whig leader that his more brilliant and eloquent rival broke off from his early party relations before the death of Lord ALTHORP; for the Mr. STANLEY of 1834, with equal advantages of birth and connexion, and second only to Sir ROBERT PEEL in Parliamentary position, could scarcely have been postponed even to the most genuine representative of hereditary and orthodox Whiggery.

If Lord DERBY should soon resign for the purpose of causing a great national sensation and to abate Irish expectation, it would be both mischievous and absurd if incidental birth or artificial connexions, were, in such a grave affair as the Premiership, to take the lead of personal capacity, or even to assume a nominal precedence. The old Tory families produce a man fit to rule about once in a hundred years, and in the intervals, the Nation has men like CANNING, PEEL, and DISRAELI, sprung from the middle classes, promoted to the leadership of this essentially aristocratic party. The Imperial reward for which “DISRAELI the Younger,” as he then wrote himself, was audacious enough to hope thirty years ago is now very nearly within his cunning grasp. When he first rose to speak in the House of the Common men, his attitudes were forced, his style extravagant, his matter worthless, his tone false. When he tried to be oratorical he provoked laughter, and when, chilled by the shouts of derision, he subdued his voice, his words were heard amid a silence so unsympathetic, that he interrupted himself to say that he would gladly have a cheer, “even from the lips of an opponent.” Such a reception was very peculiar; for the House of the Common men is, as a general rule, indulgent to excess towards maiden speeches; yet the prospective Premier of Britain was thus shouted down at his very first essay. Mr. DISRAELI then said: “I have attempted many things and have often failed at the beginning; but I have never abandoned the final hope of success. I sit down now, yet the time will come when you shall hear me.” Since that time he has made good his boast; not that the subsequent success justified the rather inflated prediction, but with the patience which is always possessed by really clever men, he unlearned the more eccentric absurdities of his style; and, after thirty years’ political toil, he is soon to be the Prime Minister of Britain. He will soon reach the highest position to which a British citizen can aspire. Since that time,—1837, only five statesmen have been Prime Minister: Sir ROBERT PEEL, Lord ABERDEEN, Lord RUSSELL, Lord PALMERSTON, and Lord DERBY. All five were at that period prominent politicians and probable Premiers in the coming years; while it would then have seemed very strange if a prophet, omitting at least a score of other secondary lights, had pointed to the poor literary young gentleman who had just entered the House as the successor in the Premiership to leading men of the day. Personages of marked ability



and worth, have devoted their lives to British politics, and have passed away without this crowning honor of the politician's career. Reflecting on their failure, Mr. Disraeli would be the last to tell the Nation that political genius alone will win the Premiership prize. "Destiny," of which goddess he has always been the avowed High Priest, will also claim her share in the forthcoming bestowal of honor and trust. But, apart from the probable change of First Minister, the great question confronts the Nation,—What will be the policy of the new prospective Ministry? While Lord DERBY was absent through illness intensified by fear and the difficulties of the situation this Session, the Opposition might courteously forbear pressure, and might postpone decisive inquiry. Nor will Mr. DISRAELI,—in the event of Lord DERBY's resignation,—be denied ample time to rebuild the Administration; but when he meets the House of the Common men again, in the character of Premier, then most assuredly will come the tug of war. First of all he must declare an Irish policy; the Nation must know the intentions and plans of the prospective Government as soon as it will be formed. With every consideration for the statesman whose talents may soon achieve so remarkable a triumph, the Nation cannot remain long blind to the fact that his position will be far more difficult than that of his predecessor. The indulgence so spontaneously, and so idolatrously accorded to Lord DERBY, in recognition of his gentle blood,—in memory of some of his services, in consideration of his age, infirmities, and other peculiar personal qualities, will not, I suspect, be extended to the statesman who is likely to follow him; for the very circumstances of Mr. DISRAELI's probable advance would appear to challenge large expectation and a vast amount of practical criticism. He will be expected, if he enters upon the Premiership, to render a clear account of his new trust; he will, with more than average sternness, be judged by his deeds. To meet that trial he must cast the slough of Tory service, and show the Nation his own true color and character,—a difficult task for him. If he is to become the Premier of Britain, and not the Premier of the Tory party, he must let the Nation see clearly that he perceives the difference between the two offices. The public will generously construe his first acts in the position to which his genius and resolve may raise him; but those first acts will go near to be his last if he should forget after promotion what is the chief honor of his triumph,—that he rose from the people and owes a deeper loyalty to the Nation than to the Tory creed, which has so long purchased and so often borrowed the misdirection of his splendid talents.

Should Mr. DISRAELI be appointed Lord DERBY's successor, he will have great difficulties before him in his new position. There are still important portions of the Reform scheme incomplete, and Ireland is a rock on which any Administration composed chiefly of aristocratic elements would be sure to split. The Tories, as you are clearly aware, want to lessen the value of the concessions they have been obliged to make by re-adjusting the boundaries of many boroughs, so as to diminish the Liberal element in the Counties. They also wish to manipulate the Scotch Representation so as to augment Soil-Lord power. How will Mr. DISRAELI, when he becomes Premier, behave in these matters, and with regard to the Irish Reform Bill, on which many difficulties are sure to arise, as true Liberals are expected to do their duty? It seems very probable that Lord STANLEY and Mr. DISRAELI will work harmoniously together, and the natural course of



events must lead to fresh divisions amongst the aristocratic houses. A re-actionary party and a moderately progressive one would appear inevitable diversions amongst them, and if the new Reform Bill works decently, a DEMOCRATIC popular party may hold the balance in its hands. Some outside politicians think that Mr. DISRAELI will be content if he can by any possibility rise to the highest political position to which a British subject can attain; but it is more likely, I think, if he does not become intoxicated by being promoted to the highest office, that he will wish to associate his name with further measures which, like the Reform Bill, belong to the progressive movements of the time. A man so able and so acute, cannot possibly labor under the delusion that British society has reached a fixed stage, and that the growth of Democracy is to have no influence on the character of legislation or the tone of society. It is not the Democratic politician who is bringing about Democratic change. The most Tory merchant who demands first-class goods for exportation,—the most aristocratic artificial noble who purchases the products of skilled labor,—the most re-actionary Soil-Lord who finds himself compelled to advocate the extended use and application of machinery on his farms,—all contribute to undermine the exclusive and narrow systems which have hitherto prevailed in British social and political life. More education,—more skill,—more trustworthiness,—these are the constant demands which various classes make upon the working class, and, so far as they are responded to, there will be an increase in the number of persons who will not tolerate inequalities that outrage the sense of Justice. Mr. DISRAELI is as capable of comprehending these things as any public man of our day, and I shall be surprised if he does not show a higher ambition than that of sitting for a brief space in the proud position which he is certain to win within a few days. The Liberal party will do well to take a generous view of the difficulties which are sure to surround him, and to help him as much as they can if he remains sober and refrains from insolence. Although he has not worked from the highest motives, he has rendered a great public service by breaking up the power of the Shuffling Whig families and of the Stand-still Tories; and if he is sustained in further efforts of the same kind, the result will be most beneficial. A premature attempt to form a Liberal Government would be a grave mistake, and the Liberals should exert themselves to bring, at least, four or five men totally unconnected with the great aristocratic families into such prominence that they must have seats in the first Liberal Cabinet that is brought together.

In the meantime, the advanced minds in the Nation are anxiously relying upon Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. FAWCETT, Mr. BRIGHT, yourself, and all your true associates in the cause of progress, for carrying forward those measures which Justice demands, and that the people are determined to have. Mr. BRIGHT is now an acknowledged great power in the State. *Ministerial decisions* are influenced by his public utterances; his speeches are eagerly read by the inhabitants of two worlds. In America, as well as in Europe, he is recognized as one of the greatest political orators and largest-minded statesmen of the day. His bitterest political opponents pay involuntary tribute to his greatness. They are terribly afraid of him; and as they are altogether unable to refute his arguments, or cope with him in eloquence, they ransack the gutters and cess-pools of purchased animosity for the rhetorical filth which is almost their sole rejoinder to his incontro-



vertible facts. Firmly believing that the good time is not far distant, when the British people will set about making successful arrangements for sufficiently training and paying men qualified by their organizations to represent them, and carry forward the national work effectually in the forthcoming new Parliament,

I am, dear Sir, your cordial co-operator in the great prevailing cause of equal Justice,

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER IV.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
February 26th, 1868.

JOHN S. MILL, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—I observe by this morning's papers that Lord DERBY has resigned, and hands his office over to his own faithful Lieutenant. The announcement will cause no surprise to the public, especially to those who have been watching for some time back the gathering storm of forthcoming political discussions. Lord DERBY, who has been three times Prime Minister of Britain, has by his passive resignation brought Tory Government to a final termination; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been commissioned to form a new Ministry. The announcement last night suspended the expected Irish debate with an interruption the causes of which political historians will thoroughly criticise and expose, notwithstanding that Mr. DISRAELI,—the adventurer,—has at last won the prize of his consummate tact and indomitable persistence. This was the inevitable and proper result. But why did not Lord DERBY resign before or at the time when Parliament met? The answer is simple. Had Lord DERBY resigned then, the *sensation* consequent upon the announcement would have lacked more than half of its intensity; and moreover, it would not have interfered so much with the Irish debate. Beyond the change in the headship of the Ministry, there must, of course, be a few other alterations. As Mr. DISRAELI is to take Lord DERBY's place, the Exchequer will, at least, become vacant. Will the new Premier confine his choice to his own colleagues?—or will Mr. DISRAELI endeavor to go beyond their circle? It may not be too curious to inquire whether the clause enabling Ministers to exchange from office to office without re-appeals to their constituencies, was prompted by any anticipation of the present emergency. It is certainly most opportune for its author at this juncture; for it enables him, if he pleases, to shift and re-shift the *personnel* of his Cabinet without that cankering element of care which used to infest all such transpositions. It is no longer necessary to be anxious about the view which the electors may have taken in the interim about the merits of their Ministerial representative. This simplifies the task of the First Minister, if it shall seem necessary to him to make transpositions; and at the same time it will have a convenience peculiarly welcome at the present juncture, since it will enable him to come to Parliament again at an earlier period than if he had to await the will of the various Boroughs and Counties concerned. It seems to me a most seasonable change, and one which the present crisis is particularly well calculated



to recommend.\* The Nation wishes to get at something definite on the perilous Irish questions ; and Lord DERBY's illness has already excited, however unjustly, too much of the attention of the State Idol worshipers ; the public attention directed towards the gouty toes of the great territorial Tory has thrown for a time national questions into the shade ; and the disappointed Mr. MAGUIRE merely expressed the universal sentiment of the *advanced minds* of the Nation when he uttered the demand that Parliament should proceed to business as soon as possible. This must be done ; and the new regulation is of signal usefulness towards that end. Mr. DISRAELI has no wishes to consult but his own and those of his colleagues ; he can say, like the Centurion, to one, " Go, and he goeth ;" and to another, " Come, and he cometh ;" and the thing will be done to the satisfaction of the man who sold his malignity to badger Sir ROBERT PEEL. In short, the retirement of the great territorial patron of the Turf,—the late Premier,—leaves the political situation substantially unchanged, and it was not to be anticipated that his successor would meet with any grave difficulty in the mere re-adjustment of the Cabinet under the statesman who has already moulded its form and shaped its policy to accomplish the purposes of his own towering ambition. The Nation has a right to demand that the Administration will at once plunge into the urgent business awaiting it ; and on the successful schemer,—Mr. DISRAELI himself,—will devolve the task of putting forth a declaration that will be heard and carefully examined far beyond the walls of the House of the Common men. The triumphant adventurer comes into office with some of the gravest questions of the present age challenging him for their solution. There may be certain grounds for some delay in producing the final sweeping measures so urgently demanded, but there can be no excuse for reticence as to the policy and intentions of the Administration,—after the Tory sensation caused by the resignation of Lord DERBY has evaporated. The Nation has a right to expect plain fore-shadowings ; and, unless Mr. DISRAELI may be thrown out of balance, or has lost all his ancient tact, he will not wantonly dally with the justifiable impatience of the British people and of the House of the Common men.

Every comprehensive politician must now be thoroughly convinced, that the *Irish Sectarian Question* really admits but of two solutions : *Disendowment* of all, or *Equitable Endowment* of all,—a complete levelling up, or a perfect levelling down ; in short, as the Mr. DISRAELI of 1844 very properly put it,—“ Ecclesiastical Equality.” When the Parliament shall re-assemble to discuss the Irish questions, the Nation may exclaim,—“ At last we shall approach *the* great British problem of the age !” A succession of incidents has delayed its discussion. During the November Session the domestic troubles of Mr. DISRAELI induced the Opposition to postpone all but the voting of the Abyssinian estimates. When Parliament met again Lord DERBY's illness suggested a large measure of excessive indulgence to a Ministry without a working chief. Now begins the reconstruction of the Cabinet, which will probably cause more than a fortnight's pause. A few days, however, will bring the leading statesmen of the Nation “ front to front” with the acknowledged Irish evils ; so that they may see them

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\* A clause in the last Reform Act obviates the necessity for the re-election of any present Minister in the House of the Common men, on his changing one office for another.



in all their height, depth, and breadth, and make one earnest effort to master them in the interest of the Empire, and in the interest of Ireland herself. There is no doubt that the Ministerial programme on this topic will be the crucial test of Mr. DISRAELI's ability to rise from the mere management of the House to the higher tasks of statesmanship; for the rescue of Ireland is not one of the questions on which the members of the House of the Common men can take the game into their own hands, and release the Premier from his profound responsibility. The present crisis is not unlike that of 1835. Then, as now, the Liberal party commanded a large majority of the members of the House of the Common men. Then, as now, a great Reform Bill had been passed, and there was, as at present, *a comparative lull* in purely English and Scotch politics. In such intervals the great Irish questions—namely, the questions of the State Church robbery and of the land plundered from the people forming the Nation,—naturally arise; the wail of wronged Ireland is heard “in the pauses of the wind” that announce the coming storm, and politicians are free to listen. Then, as now, a Tory Ministry was in office, and had to deal with the Irish difficulty. In 1835, the Ministers lost office because their measures were not bold enough for the crisis. Without any ardent desire for the long life of a Tory Cabinet, in which there will be so much effete blood, honest politicians may say, *Absit omen*; since unhappily the Liberals then pushed the Tories from their official stools, but had to abandon in office the measures they had promised the Nation when out of place. The Nation certainly cannot desire that page of political history to be written over again; nor is it at all likely. In the first place, Mr. DISRAELI, more fortunate than Sir ROBERT PEEL, has never had any close compact with Irish Orangeism, and is more free, if he minds himself properly, to deal boldly with the Irish State Church robbery. In the second place, the great Liberal leader is not a politician of the old school. Mr. GLADSTONE is not an ancient Whig; he proved in 1866, that when he proposes a great measure he means either to carry it or to resign,—the way to win, as the history of '67 shows. The Nation, therefore, may expect to see, this Session, not one of the old unprincipled party fights, with its mere contest for place, its display of public men trying to trip each other up. The Nation shall find this Session great principles brought face to face,—shall witness a contest that will severely try the mental tone and temper of our best men. The Reform question of 1867 was in the main a battle of political theories and prognostics. But now questions are to be touched that always stir deep feelings,—questions involving the right of the Roman Catholic majority of Ireland to the legislation which they desire.

Beyond every other ground for promptitude in displaying to Ireland a new spirit, an important motive is supplied in the prospect of the new Irish Reform Bill. Its details are not yet known, but it will probably include a £4 Borough Franchise,—because below that line the Proprietor pays rates,—and some redistribution that will reduce the Parliamentary power of the very small Boroughs. Now, it is clear that any such change, inevitable of course, will augment the power of the popular party, and that the number of members hostile to the Established Church *Iniquity* will be decidedly increased. The result will be, that, out of the members returned to Parliament, all but a small percentage must be representatives of the Roman Catholic ma-



jority. The Tory Soil-Lords are constantly proclaiming that Ireland is becoming very prosperous, because, though more and more land falls out of cultivation every year, yet, as her population is decreasing, that does not matter; and when they are shown that evictions and clearances drive the rural people into towns, to herd together, they answer that the change is very good. Thus a progress is observed that shows decrease of cattle, increase of sheep, decrease of tillage, increase of pasture, decrease of men, increase of discontent, decrease of the more healthy rural, and increase of the crowded urban population; and all this is so satisfactory that Liberal statesmen are not to touch the beautiful fabric of Irish prosperity lest they should rudely bring it to the ground. Will Mr. DISRAELI indorse this insanity? Will the triumphant schemer have the courage to rise above the bigotry of his old Tory supporters, and disdain the weak apologies of Whig journalists? Mr. DISRAELI has taken possession of the great prize; he has attained a magnificent political position. But the post of Prime Minister of Britain is certainly no sinecure: it is powerful enough to gratify a vaulting ambition; but it has a burthen of care sufficient to keep down any excessive exuberance of spirits. Mr. DISRAELI has shown himself bold enough in a hardly secondary position; but there is no doubt that his responsibility is largely increased by the fact that he stands alone at the head of the Ministry, and that the Nation expects from him a decisive course with respect to the most urgent yet most difficult problem of the day. The gentleman of the press finds himself now the successor of CHATHAM, CANNING, PEEL, and DERBY. But he will do well to remember, that history will efface his Administration from her tablets with a contemptuous stroke of the pen, if he and his Cabinet should try to dodge the stern necessities of the hour with make-believe professions and ingenious delays. In 1844, Mr. DISRAELI, then one of the Tory rank-and-file, made a very able and liberal speech on Irish affairs, and pronounced for "*Ecclesiastical Equality*." Would it be too much to ask him to say these words over again from his present high place on the Treasury Bench? Of one thing he may be certain, and that is, that the Nation shall not fail to try his metal.

Those who will take the trouble to turn to the opening chapters of "CONINGSBY," at the present political crisis, may enjoy, if they examine Mr. DISRAELI's day-dreams many years ago, something of the pleasure of a new sensation. They will see how the ingenious author of that sparkling work delighted in the peculiar political excitement of forming imaginary Cabinets, and how he endeavored to realize the position of the fortunate statesman who had been chosen by the Sovereign to construct a Government, and the paralyzing anxieties of the small-brained politicians, whom he characterized as the "TADPOLES" and "TAPERS," for the "UNDER-SECRETARY-SHIPS" and the "COMMISSIONERSHIPS" which were at the disposal of the Chief of the party. The pages in which the peculiar situation of 1832 is depicted, when the Socialistic KING WILLIAM the IV,—the bosom friend and convert of the illustrious philanthropist, ROBERT OWEN,—sent for the great trained-man-killer,—the callous-minded Duke of WELLINGTON, who had to drive down Constitution Hill with his carriage doors locked and pistols by his side, have at the present time a very vivid personal interest. The man who wrote the pages referred to in 1843, when he was almost despairingly endeavoring to convince Sir ROBERT PEEL of his great value, and who, in



the same work, spoke of Sir ROBERT as the great man in a great position once sent for from Rome to Govern Britain, is now himself busily engaged in the work of forming a Government, and finds his imaginative descriptions realized in his own person. If Mr. DISRAELI was to Govern the British Empire at all, it is no doubt much better that he should Govern it openly than through some titled dummy. This much Mr. DISRAELI's most decided and uncompromising political opponents can cheerfully acknowledge. There are now many special grounds or *particular* circumstances that diminish to some extent the objections which may justly be entertained by many to such a Premiership. That a man who, at the commencement of his political career, wrote "*Vivian Grey*," in which the leading idea is that of a clever schemer,—a smart unscrupulous adventurer,—using Dukes, Marquises, and Earls as his tools, and acting on the words, which are printed on the title-page,—"*The world is mine oyster, which I with sword will open*,"—(the sword in this case being, however, a ready and unscrupulous tongue,)—should, after carrying, as they who have watched Mr. DISRAELI cannot but affirm, the theory he then formed of political advancement literally into practice, and after showing not the slightest regard to any political principle, except as it might contribute to his own political purposes, become Prime Minister of Britain, is, no doubt, when properly viewed, an instance of national humiliation. Until last Session, however, careful observers had some ground for believing that the rank-and-file of the Tory party which had accepted Mr. DISRAELI's services had not been permanently affected by his example. It was well known that for many years they preferred Lord PALMERSTON as Prime Minister to Lord DERBY; and I need scarcely say, that in this great office Lord DERBY was indefinitely more acceptable to them than Mr. DISRAELI now is or ever can be. Last Session, however, the great body of the Tories may fairly be considered to have adopted Mr. DISRAELI's leadership. They did what he told them. They voted for Household Suffrage, after opposing Mr. GLADSTONE's moderate Reform Bill of the previous Session. They have since allowed Mr. DISRAELI to declare that all the expedients of fancy franchises, of personal rating, and of dual votes were only used as blinkers to a shying horse, for the purpose of leading his followers to adopt the great extension of the Suffrage, which, had it been at first plainly exposed before them, they never would have approached. He has boasted of his efforts for their education. The recent language of Sir S. NORTHCOTE, Mr. HARDY, and even Lord STANLEY, proved that they were willing pupils, who in the enjoyment of the honors and emoluments of office, showed a merciful unconsciousness of their degradation. They have adopted Mr. DISRAELI's manner. They are practised in his *Arts*. The whole Tory party, with some honorable exceptions, have graduated in his school. Since he is now really their political chief,—since they are not ashamed of him,—since they glory in him,—it is but right that this gentleman, without rank or title, without any earnest convictions, except a firm belief in himself, and still calling himself a Jew,—though "*a Jew who believes in both parts of the Jewish religion*,"—should stand forth the Prime Minister of the great aristocratic party that has so long professed to walk in the ancient ways, to combat Democracy, and to maintain an uncompromising devotion to the State Church of England. Some people may, indeed, feel inclined to weep, and others to laugh, at this strange spectacle.



But it is the affair of the Tories more than of the Liberals, who, under such circumstances, have all the more cause to rejoice that they have such a leader as Mr. GLADSTONE. It is for the Liberals to see that Mr. DISRAELI, as Prime Minister, continues to educate his own followers to do Liberal work, and that they do not lend themselves to any of his re-actionary schemes. Even the Tories themselves can scarcely believe that a DISRAELI Administration can strengthen Tory institutions.

We are emphatically living in a Democratic age. Many sincere adherents of the cause of progress and reform, who have no intrinsic admiration of Mr. DISRAELI, will delight at seeing him thus maintain his ground against the Earls, Marquises, and Dukes who sit in the same Cabinet with him, but who look down upon him as a clever but low-born adventurer. This personal triumph may thus be said to assist the Cause of Democracy. It shows, that, in the most aristocratic Nation in the whole world, the highest position to which a citizen may aspire can be attained, even against the most wealthy and the proudest of patrician rivals, by a mere plebeian. The Tory party may boast that their highest places are really open to all competitors ; that they are willing to act on the Democratic maxims, "A free career to talents," and "The tools to the man who can use them." The pretensions even of the great Whig families are tacitly but emphatically rebuked by Mr. DISRAELI's advancement. If the Tories thus accept Mr. DISRAELI as their Prime Minister, it will not do for the Peers and their dependents, who call themselves Whigs and Liberals, to continue their old system of exclusion, by which EDMUND BURKE, who had virtually led the party for many years, and was really the *Educator* of their young chief, CHARLES JAMES FOX, was kept out of the Cabinet, not only when the second ROCKINGHAM Administration was formed, but afterwards during the coalition Ministry of FOX and NORTH. Too much, however, will doubtless be made of this personal success. It is, no doubt, gratifying to Mr. DISRAELI thus to rise to the highest place ; but it must not be forgotten that the means he has employed have not always been the most praiseworthy. The evil of his political career consists in the fact that the end has been regarded as more important than the means employed to accomplish it, even when this end was, after all, merely personal. What *Cause* has Mr. DISRAELI ever cordially identified himself with and successfully advocated ? His sole legislative achievement is the concession of Household Suffrage, which he induced his party to accept last Session, after refusing to reduce the Borough Franchise at all in 1859, and opposing Mr. GLADSTONE's seven-pound Borough Franchise in 1866. This Household Suffrage is thoroughly disliked by the Tories, and may be disliked still more when it will be found that the calculations by which they were prevailed upon to accept it as advantageous to the interests of their party, were utterly erroneous, and were formed under the idea that the people now, in the rural districts of England, are what they were thirty or forty years ago, when Mr. DISRAELI was young. As so many complaints are heard from the Tories about the alarming theories which are now promulgated, it may not be out of place to remind them that they have Mr. DISRAELI to thank for the daring proposals which men of eminence now, do not hesitate to make. Why is it that people are less cautious than they were even twelve months ago ? Why is it that theories are broached which, a year ago, would have been regarded as purely Utopian ? It is owing to the manner in which the Government was



conducted last Session, and Household Suffrage, without being asked for, forced upon the acceptance of the Legislature as a party manœuvre. It is in the nature of extremes to produce extremes. The Household Suffrage of last Session has caused many things to be considered possible, which, until then, were regarded as utterly visionary. The functions of a responsible leader of the Government were all abnegated last year by Mr. DISRAELI. He made the House of the Common men really the Government; and did more to introduce the flood-tide of Democracy than any statesman of this generation. As Prime Minister, he cannot show this servile deference to a mere majority former anyhow. He must have a policy of his own. He must show himself conscious of responsibility. I am not, indeed, altogether of the opinion proclaimed by some of my most esteemed political friends, that because Mr. DISRAELI has been reckless and unscrupulous in an inferior position, he ought to be placed in the highest in order to become more cautious. Men may, indeed, be sobered by responsibility. But I am not at all satisfied that, because the Ship's First Lieutenant has shown himself ready to let the State Vessel drive at the mercy of the winds and waves if only he could gratify his personal vanity, he ought to be made Captain that he may act with more prudence for the Nation's sake as well as his own. A DISRAELI Ministry, however, is, it seems, at the present moment, a necessity. If Mr. DISRAELI can persuade his colleagues and his party to accept him as the head of the Government, the Liberals may reconcile themselves to the prospect, without being at all enraptured with what they are called upon for a time to endure. If everything else fails the Liberals, they may, at least, put their trust in the *Million-tongued Press* conducted by men who comprehend the Principles of Political Science. The party of progress may not be destined to perish altogether. As Britain has been reminded by a brilliant historian that she owes more to the weakness of her worst Sovereigns than to the wisdom of the best, so even a DISRAELI Ministry, checked by a powerful Opposition led by Mr. GLADSTONE, may do more for national progress than the ablest Liberal Government could do, opposed by an unscrupulous Opposition led by the *once poor man of the Press* who has now become Prime Minister, with Earls, Marquises, and Dukes to attend him.

Whatever political opponents may say to the happy fortune which has bestowed on Mr. DISRAELI the crowning ambition of his remarkable career, it is certain that his own party has no excuse for opposing the slightest obstacle to his final success. Mr. DISRAELI has frequently intimated, especially in the novels of his hot-headed youth, that the aristocracy,—the artificial nobles who possess the property plundered from the Nation by the consent of defunct Monarchs,—are the real natural leaders of the British people. But, in building up a party and constructing a Cabinet, he has been obliged to some extent to reverse the idea, and to make men sprung from the people the leaders of an aristocratic party, and the chief persons in a Cabinet actually crowded with dandy dummy Dukes. In looking over the prospective list of the new Ministry, as given by the leading London journals, one is struck by this mingling of two classes,—those who are overshadowed by their ancestry, and those whose names are made remarkable by their own achievements alone. Decidedly the new men have the best of it. In the first place, Mr. DISRAELI has the Premiership, and everybody knows who he is; but does any British book of territorial aristocracy



trace him back beyond his grandfather, exiled from Venice for fidelity to his faith? Then, the Lord Chancellorship, the Exchequer, and the Home Office,—three of the most important posts,—are to be filled by men all sprung from the *middle-classes*; so that nobody can say that, when the dandy dummy Dukes and the determined Democrats now meeting at the Treasury, came to divide the spoil, the artificial nobles took the lion's share, and left to the fresh men of common blood the inferior loaves and fishes. As a kind of nexus between these un-aristocratic officials and the higher grades of the Peerage, the Nation has an interesting element in the representatives of what are called "*good county families*." If Mr. DISRAELI wishes now to know a Duke thoroughly, he may approach the honor by degrees, and glide smoothly from small-brained baronets into the blissful presence of the dandiest dummy Dukes. How far it contributes to a man's happiness to have proud Dukes for his official friends and fellow-counsellors it is not for *me*, an humble writer, to say; only one, "gentleman of the press,"—Mr. DISRAELI himself,—has attained that extraordinary felicity; and as yet he has not written his own memoirs. Well, then, as Mr. DISRAELI looks around the Council table, and finds that wherever he turns his gaze, it lights upon a noble Duke,—I am not so sure of his sentiments as to be able to infer how very happy he must feel on account of his glittering surroundings. Who knows but even Dukes may probably pall upon the new Premier's taste? Can such things be? Do sensible people ever get tired of talking to a Prince of the bluest blood? Has any one ever yawned in the company of a Countess? What is the real utility of worshiping State Idols?—nick-named men?—artificial nobles though loaded with glittering baubles? The Duke of BUCKINGHAM ought to be prouder on account of his being Chairman of the London and North-Western than of his indirect descent from royalty; and his business experience is certainly of more value to the new Premier and the Nation than his *blue gentle-blood*. The Duke of RICHMOND—(though more positively a Scion of a recent royal house, and though in him the blue gentle-blood of the Second CHARLES is mingled with that of one of those "*high-class unfortunate females*" to whom Mr. CARLYLE half-compassionately, half-contemptuously alludes)—may be of little real use to Mr. DISRAELI. The Duke of MARLBOROUGH represents, of course, the undying glory of the first wearer of the glittering nickname; and in the Duke of MONTROSE, "the great Marquis" is still brought before us in name. Why has not Lord DERBY recommended to Manufacture Mr. DISRAELI into a Duke?

But, even when the four Dukes are dismissed from view, the beholder has not half exhausted the aristocratic character of Mr. DISRAELI's *subordinates*. Lord STANLEY represents one of the highest territorial families in England; the Marquis of ABERCORN, Mr. DISRAELI's Viceroy in pilfered and insulted Ireland, is a triple Peer,—in England, Scotland, and *France*; Lord DEVON is of the family of COURTENAY, said by GIBBON to bear the oldest surname in Europe. Is there any grand mysterious meaning in this fact,—any great moral principle of Political Science brought to view by this significant fact,—that a Cabinet led by our newest man,—but yesterday a mere political adventurer,—contains more gentle blood than almost any Cabinet of modern times? Can you not infer from it the extensive teachableness of the British aristocracy,—their readiness, at least, to accept the leadership of genius,—their recognition of mental power, when they see it displayed in political



affairs, rather than in horse-racing? There certainly never was a person who owed less to family or connexions, or even to early friends, than Mr. DISRAELI, the successful adventurer. He has carved his way upwards almost alone. The idea that Lord GEORGE BENTINCK helped him much is utterly absurd; that stout and stern-brained squire, who left horse-racing for the House of the Common men, and during his short political career made up by industry and audacious courage for what he wanted in knowledge or tact, owed a great deal to his more able Lieutenant; but there was no debt on the other side. And even in his later career Mr. DISRAELI has to a great extent worked alone. The best and the worst qualities of his mental constitution are utterly—un-British. He is never wanting in theory, and British-men always are. He has no mastery of dry details, and in these the keenest British-men,—politicians like PEEL and GLADSTONE,—thoroughly delight. He is fond of generalizing largely beyond the immediate questions of the day, and in this the true British politician,—“Content to dwell in present needs for ever,”—rarely indulges. All these alien characteristics of his mind make it the more surprising that he has acquired, and retained, the leadership of a party more deeply steeped than any other in old British prejudices. But his genius has carved the way. Of course, various incidents have helped. The death of Sir ROBERT PEEL removed the man, who, notwithstanding his desertions, would, if he had lived, have probably again led the Tory party. The death of Lord GEORGE BENTINCK also took away a politician, who, on account of his gentle birth and fair average talent, would have possibly taken the Premiership before him. But, after all, mere incidents don't help incompetent men,—noodles, however blue or gentle their blood may be. Had not Mr. DISRAELI possessed rare political ability, great perseverance, physical endurance to face year after year the hard work of the House of the Common men, no probabilities would have placed him where he is. What grand use will he make of his power? How much further will he be able to go, in the way of reducing the vain conceits of the territorial aristocracy of Britain? A short period of time may show.

It may be very difficult to do justice to a cotemporary politician like Mr. DISRAELI, but I have sometimes sincerely wished that the fairness and generous feeling always exhibited in British respectable newspapers and magazines when a distinguished man is ejected from the physical form, should occasionally be displayed while he is still among us residing in the bodily organization. The critical commentators who declare that Mr. DISRAELI is now Premier solely because he has been *indefinitely unscrupulous* do violence to *Charity* and *Truth*. Mr. DISRAELI has been unscrupulous without measure; but his party has been guilty more than once of manœuvres that must have seemed to every careful observer like very sharp practice,—of disingenuous dodges that have elicited general censure and national rebuke. But,—Why should some critics attribute all Tory tricks to Mr. DISRAELI, and yet give credit for inconsistent virtues,—chivalry, manliness, conscientiousness,—to his colleagues, the very companions of his every political act? Why should the once poor Mr. DISRAELI be a scapegoat for Tory Tricks, and Lord DERBY, Lord STANLEY, and Mr. WALPOLE get off free of all blame? Of course, every allowance must be made for people who, while they swallowed all the bread-and-butter hidden in their pockets,—were perfectly astounded at the most uncommon bolt which



Mr. DISRAELI made last year of the sayings that he had uttered the year before. But, then, the bolting of past stale principles is only a simple process of degree and of time. Lord CRANBORNE and general PEEL, considered by the State Idol worshipers models of consistency, declared in absence of sufficient public pressure in 1866, against all reduction of the Franchise; yet in the presence of public pressure in 1867, when in office, they both consented to the Ten Minutes Bill, reducing the Franchise to £6 rating,—Was that their unwavering fidelity to good old Toryism? As to Lord CRANBORNE, I am quite sure that before his political career is closed he will have recanted every Tory vow he has ever made, and that his lordship will soon take up his position as a *thorough active Liberal*. It is easy for critics to discuss such things with one idea as their guide; to attribute changes in one politician to the purest motives, and in another to merely selfish personal aspirations: but ordinary critics cannot read the mental operations, they can only judge words and actions. In Mr. DISRAELI is found what is unfortunately too common amongst politicians, a readiness to express during debate opinions that will help to a temporary success; but he is certainly not the only statesman, although he is a very prominent offender, who could be contradicted by quoting his own words from “Hansard.” If, indeed, critics had discerned in the new Premier an invariable readiness to adopt the opinions of his party, and pander to the prejudices of the day, there might be more just cause of complaint; but, whatever other errors he may have, he does not always run with the current of the opinions of his time. He has often held firmly to unpopular views. He was one of the eulogists of LOUIS NAPOLEON’s when few men praised him. He spoke respectfully of the Church of Rome when three-fourths of the Tories reviled it. He was anti-Italian when nearly all Britain was on the other side. He was friendly and fair to the United States when ninety-nine out of every hundred Tories, and nearly all “good society” in Britain, were Confederate in tone. I, of course, say nothing as to the character of the opinions thus held, or as to the foundational motives for holding and expressing them, but, at all events, he gave some proof of his *distinct individuality*, and of *apparent independence*, in adhering to them when they were decidedly anything but fashionable. It may be, however, that this assumable characteristic of his mind,—the apparent tenacity with which he pretends to hold some of his own supposed pet ideas,—is for a Prime Minister a very great defect: it may prove that he lacks sympathy with the progressive spirit of the Nation, and it may soon bring him into serious collision with popular opinion. But it is not altogether consistent with popular discrimination that mere “*successful scheming*” has made “*a man of the press*” a Premier, and that Mr. DISRAELI has outstripped so many artificially noble competitors solely because he was “*ready to profess and practice any principles that would help him into power.*” Such a shallow superficial verdict hardly becomes respectable British public writers of the present day.

The combined causes which led to Lord DERBY’s resignation might naturally justify any public writer to forget his Premiership, and to glance at him apart from his office; to dismiss for a moment all the measures associated with his political life, and to think of him more immediately in the individual characteristics which greatly tinge the color of his career. Few men of the present age have so largely carried distinct personality into practical politics. Others will be



remembered for their association with some particular principle,—some great fundamental measure,—some sweeping party policy; but much more than half of Lord DERBY's powerful influence sprang, not so much from what he has ever said or done, as from what he is by organization and the effects of external circumstances upon him through life. Quite independently of politics, he has always been, with the admirers of Aristocrats and State Idols, an eminently popular man. He is thoroughly a territorial aristocrat, and always overflowing with cheap condescension. This it was that gave him a principal part of his great strength as a Tory leader. He was not only always amongst his admiring stand-still party, but condescended to be of them; and the result was certainly almost marvelous and extremely surprising. Neither the Duke of WELLINGTON,—“who died doubly and went down,”—nor the never-to-be-forgotten Sir ROBERT PEEL, could match Lord DERBY in exciting devotional admiration and securing passive adherence. The pelf and power-loaded Duke of WELLINGTON,—the trained arch man-killer, with all his military and personal man-killing reputation, could not conciliate his fawning followers when he changed his politics in 1829. The illustrious and patriotic Sir ROBERT PEEL, failed to take his party with him when he *conscientiously* turned FREE-TRADER in 1846. But Lord DERBY, by the great magnetic power of his gentle blood, did what no leader of a party of Tory aristocrats ever achieved before; after leading his passive and favored followers for long years in one crooked direction, full of obstructive barriers to National progress and prosperity, he very suddenly, at the special request and suggestion of the charming author of “Vivian Grey,” asked them to accompany him, like docile boys, in the directly opposite straight path, and, with a few snappish exceptions, they all “stuck to their territorial Tory chief.” Making due allowance for those who were in any way tempted by their need or greed of the loaves and fishes, a wonderful fact was presented to the Nation,—a legion of well-to-do county aristocrats,—Soil-Lords great and small, or the servile nominees of the possessors of the people's public property, many of them entirely uninterested in patronage, accepting their leader's word and submissively and silently voting as white, what up to the evening before they had all counted black. The secret cause of this is to be found in the nature of the man,—in the free familiar manifestations of the territorial aristocrat. Lord DERBY has always been very frank, and especially with his followers. Lord DERBY's Brain is much larger in the region of the LOVE-OF-APPROBATION than in that of Self-Esteem. He is a very superior organization when compared to Lord RUSSELL. He made no mystery of the leadership, and he never announced to the House any change of which he had not already informed his party; so that had they desired to rebel they had ample opportunity to set up the standard of revolt. Secondly, he always declared that he would not hold office except he were cordially supported by his favored party,—a declaration that placed the game in their own hands. Thirdly, he set a very high value on the cordial friendship and approval of his colleagues,—too high, indeed, when it is remembered that, to retain Lord CRANBORNE and General PEEL, he adopted under the force of pressure the absurd Ten Minutes' Bill; but this part of his character gained him extensive good-will, if it cost him the reduction of repute for political wisdom.

There is much in Lord DERBY's earlier career which his present



cotemporaries have forgotten. He was Chief Secretary for Ireland under Lord GREY, and was distinguished for hard work; he was also well inclined to be Liberal towards the newly Emancipated Roman Catholics. But he came unavoidably into personal collision with the Leader of the Irish people, the great O'CONNELL. "The Mighty Irish LIBERATOR," as he was emphatically designated, had many gigantic and good qualities, but he had one damning dark fault; he pushed political vituperation to an excess in which he was literally unsurpassed. It is hardly too much to say that O'CONNELL's unsparing and repeated attacks drove,—the born aristocrat,—Lord DERBY, into the arms of the Irish No-Surrender Protestants; and there is, moreover, no doubt that this early hostility to the *great national* Leader of the Irish Roman Catholics did much to color his whole after career. Lord DERBY started in life as a thorough Liberal,—of the limited length and breadth of the period,—and it is quite possible that he might have been, years ago, one of the leaders of the Liberal section of the Whigs, had he but remained with his earlier friends. He belonged to the Ministry that carried the first Reform Bill of 1832, though he was not in the Cabinet, and took very little share in the conduct of the measure. To this part of his career, however, belong two measures of undying importance: he was Colonial Secretary when the West India negroes were set free; he was Secretary for Ireland when National Education was introduced. An ordinary public man might rest his title to fame on two such remarkable achievements. His secession from the Liberals was principally caused by the resolve of the party to redistribute the revenues of the Irish State Church, so as to assist Education. The resolution was a bone of contention for four years, and ultimately the idea had to be given up; but it produced one permanent result,—the Liberal party lost in the great territorial aristocrat Lord DERBY, a very influential champion for exciting the unmeasured admiration of State Idol worshipers and sycophants. He was even then, probably, the best debater in the House of the Common men, clear in statement, simple in style, always using homely Saxon words, but weaving them in an exquisite pattern of his own, fiery in tone and marvelously apt at retort and repartee. Here he again encountered O'CONNELL, and the readers of the tame Parliamentary debates of the present day should study the newspapers of that time to see what the House of Common men warfare at its fiercest can be. Even the dull pages of HANSARD glow with the fiery interjections and the flaming interruptions that O'CONNELL, then in the zenith of his fame, flashed forth and provoked. Speeches as denunciatory of England as the incriminated articles of some Dublin papers of the present day, were of course saluted with indignant shouts, but were finished and flashed forth in the rich mind-reaching tones of the great IRISHMAN, as he tried successfully to outshoot his many assailants, whom as a rule he managed to put down. Yet sometimes they had their little lengths of revenge. Hardly had the IRISH LIBERATOR ceased when Lord STANLEY would start to his feet, his rising hailed with ringing aristocratic cheers; and would delight his gentle-blooded party and avenge England, the conqueror of Ireland, by a torrent of oratorical reply, every sentence having its sting, every word barbed, and the whole emphasized by his unconcealed contempt for, and fierce hatred of, the "honorable and learned Irish gentleman." Those who remember with pleasure the intense and hot interest of the great word-fights of those days may almost be inclined to regret that



there are no such single combats to-day; but such politicians are too apt to forget that the unseemly rivalry between Mr. O'CONNELL, the large-brained, profoundly serious, and naturally noble Irish champion, and the artificially noble Lord STANLEY, the patron of horse-racing, stopped all beneficial Irish legislation for a quarter of a century, and that, whoever won, Ireland and England lost. O'CONNELL, indeed, also lived to have his revenge, although, stricken with his fatal illness, he hardly enjoyed it. In 1845 Lord DERBY introduced an excellent Tenant-Right Bill for Ireland, so liberal and so just that no succeeding Bill has surpassed it,—so liberal and so just that the gilded high Chamber of the Soil-Gods of Britain, called the House of the Lords, of course, threw it out. When he next seceded from a Ministry, Lord DERBY carried a party with him. He was the Lord CRANBORNE of PEEL's Cabinet; but his followers were at least two hundred. Even then it was somewhat doubtful whether he was thoroughly in principle an out-and-out Protectionist. He thought, however, that Free-Trade was the proper work of a Liberal, not of a Tory Cabinet, and to please his territorial friends he refused to remain. Everybody knows his subsequent career,—it is so very near,—his small and defeated Reform Bill of 1859, his gradually great and successful measure of 1867. These are ashes which will not be stirred just now; under them still live their wonted fires.

It will be observed that the two chief legislative achievements of Lord DERBY's long career were accomplished when he was the colleague of Lord GREY. The Irish System of National Education has been always associated with his name, and his more recent followers have long since forgotten or probably never put themselves in possession of the fact, that he introduced the measure by which several Irish bishoprics were very properly suppressed. As Secretary for the Colonies, he was the organ of the Cabinet in carrying the abolition of slavery, and the grant of £20,000,000 to the planters of the WEST INDIES and of MAURITIUS, for their cessation to be dealers in human flesh. During the same period he was one of the most powerful speakers in the House of the Common men, and he was especially conspicuous as the daring and formidable antagonist of the late great Mr. O'CONNELL. The phrase of "*alliterative abuse*," by which the great IRISH LIBERATOR avenged himself for constant vexation and apparent defeat, has been frequently quoted as a proof that Mr. STANLEY was at the time referred to both acrimonious and extremely unpopular. An offensive, but at the same time a very significant nickname was the inevitable result of any unfair conflict with the great O'CONNELL or with the famous COBBETT. The popular orators of the present day may be as eloquent as either of those politicians of the days of other years, and probably, equally honest and sincere in promoting the cause of human progress, but they no longer appeal so constantly to the humorous instincts of their followers. Having never been in his later years very conspicuous for either political forethought or for desirable prudence, Lord DERBY has probably not felt any serious remorse for occasional outbursts of violence, and the abuse of better men than himself in his youth.

Lord STANLEY's secession from the callous Whigs on the question of the Appropriation Clause proved to be the first step in a natural transition to the purest form of party Toryism. In 1834 he still held back from a coalition with Sir ROBERT PEEL; but as the memory of the



Reform contest faded in the distance, he gradually became the staunch ally of his former opponent. The great knowledge and capacity of his mentally progressed chief reduced him,—the re-actionary *gentle-blooded* aristocrat,—to the rank of a subordinate in the Cabinet of 1841; but is PEEL gradually inclined to more Liberal opinions and comprehensive views, the hopes of the Tories were fixed on their zealous convert, and when the party was split in two by the repeal of the Corn-Laws, Lord STANLEY naturally succeeded to the post of leader of the stupid stand-still-heads, which he has, with the requisite assistance of his Lieutenant, held without much dispute. Both from his own mental development, and in conformity with the aristocratic traditions of his generation, he has been always inclined,—indeed, determined,—to make the predominance of his party his principal object. Sir ROBERT PEEL, with a cooler temperament,—with a superior organization, derived from better parental conditions,—and with a more comprehensive and a larger development of BENEVOLENCE and CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, although he had formed a party and secured a majority with unexampled skill, used his supremacy, as soon as he had attained it, exclusively for the benefit of the Nation. Lord DERBY, like the “No Popery” man Lord RUSSELL, always considered a Parliamentary victory rather as a coveted personal prize than as a grand condition of practical political activity, and a means of progressive utility. Mr. GLADSTONE has well learned the lesson which was taught by the noble example of the great master-minded PEEL, in looking solely to Administrative and legislative utility, without stopping from time to time to count his forces. It was not till Sir ROBERT PEEL had formed a great party of the most developed men around him, and hopelessly defeated Opposition, that he began his fruitful course of economical measures. Lord RUSSELL, though he was not altogether devoid of patriotic feeling, sincerely identified the success of his party with the welfare of the Nation,—that is, took it for granted that the success of himself and his party constituted an important element of national prosperity. Lord DERBY, not probably believing profoundly in the efficiency of aristocratic legislation, seems in later years to have regarded political contests between Tories and Whigs as he may have thought of his contemporaneous efforts at Ascot and Newmarket. Although he was to some extent personally indifferent to the possession of office on the mere account of its emoluments, still he liked to win for himself and his associates; and his occasional triumphs and partial success have been somewhat analogous to the questionable victories of a second competitor in a race, on the mere technical disqualification of a speedier rival. Although he has been three times Prime Minister, Lord DERBY has never commanded anything like a majority in the House of the Common men, and on each occasion he has succeeded to office as a kind of an inevitable alternative. His first appointment was caused by Lord JOHN RUSSELL’s petulant blunder in quarrelling with the cunning, time-serving trickster Lord PALMERSTON, and his second by Lord PALMERSTON’s reckless abuse of the apparent security to which he seemed to have attained when his supporters swept the constituencies at the general election of 1857. On the third occasion Lord DERBY was indebted to Mr. GLADSTONE’s awkward acquiescence in Lord RUSSELL’s *penurious* Whiggery, for the opportunity of attempting to retrieve his former failures. A majority of eighty *stand-stills* bequeathed by Lord PALMERSTON to his successors, had, by the unskilful manœuvres



of Lord RUSSELL during a few months, become hopelessly clubbed into a formidable obstruction, and Lord DERBY, with the indispensable assistance of Mr. DISRAELI, had only, without any resistance, to enter upon and occupy an undefended position.

It may not be yet the proper time to discuss Lord DERBY's latest political acts, designed and shaped by Mr. DISRAELI, except so far as he has himself explained his own motives. With perfect candor,—with unreserved defiance,—and with evident unconsciousness of the extremely questionable nature of his defiant avowal, he has frequently stated, with the coolness of an intolerable aristocratic domination, that he had determined not to be ejected from office a third time on the issue which had proved fatal to his two former Administrations. Political Moralists of another school might properly hold that twenty abdications or expulsions from power were indefinitely preferable to an entire change of political principles and conduct; but the ingenious Mr. DISRAELI could easily devise an apology for proceedings which seemed to the simpler mind of the great aristocratic Lord DERBY, to require no elaborate excuse. On many former occasions he has displayed very imperfect moral sensitiveness to considerations which would have restrained more cautious Statesmen, if not from doubtful and defiant acts, at least from unnecessary declarations of profound insolence towards the progressive spirit of the age. Carelessness and laxity of expression are very great defects in Statesmen, and yet the tyrannical temper which they indicate is in itself not unpopular amongst aristocrats of gentle blood. Perfect art, in political discussion as elsewhere, conceals itself, combining impenetrable thoughts with an open countenance; but an occasional burst of aristocratic recklessness in minor matters repels confidence less than a minutely ostentatious anxiety to avoid all cause of offence by concealing motives and smooth expressions. It seemed somewhat natural that an orator like Lord DERBY who was always vigorous and often witty should sometimes deviate into defiant rashness, knowing he had a sharp and biting-tongued instrument like Mr. DISRAELI at his back always ready for action offensive and defensive. I have known an author praise the Earl of the Turf for thirteen pages together, though I am sure he knew nothing of him, but that he had plenty of money to spare, if he could be induced to part with it. This author made Lord DERBY intelligent, wise, just, pious, and highly benevolent, for no cause in the world, but in hopes to find him *charitable*. Mr. PENDRIVE gave the Earl a most bountiful development of the Organ of Benevolence, because he himself had a most empty stomach and a thinly-covered back. This practice being general among a certain class of public writers, it is a very easy matter to guess, by the length and breadth of the panegyric,—that is, by the size of the praise bestowed,—how wealthy the expected patron may be, or how hungry the author really is. When I see a long list of rare excellencies and of distinguished talents crammed down an artificial nobleman's throat, who has no right to them, I am not at all surprised, because I am sure it is not meant as an encomium upon his artificial honor, but merely a direct declaration of the author's wants,—indeed, a heavy complaint of nakedness and hunger by Mr. PENDRIVE.

Nearly all the current comments on Lord DERBY's political life, career, and character are written in a very friendly spirit and style. His defects are, however, as conspicuous as Lord RUSSELL's peevish perversities; but they are far less irritating, probably because they



really seem to be less willful. Lord RUSSELL is very strongly tinted with aristocratic vanity and with the conventional insolence of his order. The arrogance of the "No Popery" Lord RUSSELL arises, no doubt, from the extreme development of his *Self-Esteem*, well fed and perpetually supported by the idea that he is really the son of a Duke. Criticisms on Lord RUSSELL almost always betray the feelings which are naturally provoked by a certain narrow-minded self-complacency which has been invariably exhibited both in his wiser and his less wise acts. Lord DERBY, on the contrary, whatever may have been the faults of his career, has not been either extremely egotistical or sophistically shallow. One of Lord DERBY's claims to popularity has always rested on the fact of his undeviating fondness of horses. And it has always been conventionally understood throughout England, that an excessive familiarity with the stable induces a peculiar laxity of principle and practice, which is more agreeable to the general taste of the territorial aristocracy than mere puritanical pretensions and pompous strictness. Lord DERBY has always received the praises of his party and followers as a just tribute to his *ideal greatness*, and not as the *mere expressions of needy dependents* upon his expected patronage and support. Subordinate persons,—common organisms,—establish no additional title to overflowing respect by engaging in the fluctuating speculations of the Turf; but an artificially noble Prime Minister who keeps a racing stud, conciliates aristocratic public feeling by the implied admission that he pretends to be no better, nor more civilized than his territorial neighbors. A certain sharpness which is studiously cultivated and carried to excess in the betting ring, is the only intellectual quality which a very large majority of the British aristocracy either understand or value. Lord DERBY is extremely capable of chuckling at the oversight of an adversary, or even at a minor display of slender ingenuity on his own part; but as in greater matters he has never been a cunning or tricky intriguer like the late Lord PALMERSTON, his little triumphs in debate or management are generally further rewarded by the unmeasured applause of idiotic bystanders,—by the humble homage of the State Idol worshipers. Probably the most popular of all Lord DERBY's compound gifts, consists in the aggregate of unpaid for advantages which he enjoys as proofs of the iniquitous legislation of former times. A virtuous hard-working man struggling with the adversity of unjust laws, is a sight for the contemplation of even the Lords and Gods of despotism itself; but gentle-blooded men take far more pleasure in watching her favorites catching the smiles of "Dame Fortune." The combination of iniquitous incidents that placed the horse-racing Prime Minister at the head of a wealthy family of high artificial rank and ancient lineage, secured the unbounded sympathy of social equals and awed the ambition of intellectual rivals. In some respects, Lord DERBY had a fair start with competitors of humbler station, for the artificial rank which provides exceptional opportunities, at the same time diminishes the stimulus to the necessary exertion for the acquisition of greatness. If success had been less easy and less early, Lord DERBY would probably have studied social and political questions more deeply, though it may be doubted whether increased wisdom and more extensive knowledge would have strengthened the confidence of his stupid-headed party.

Lord DERBY's public career, which has been one of no ordinary length and distinction, has been at last brought to a close. The alleged



cause of his withdrawal into privacy is the precarious state of his health, but for a long time past his mind has, evidently, not been in his work, which was, I have little doubt, caused by the defections from his party of some of its best men,—by the rapid growth of popular demands,—by the increasing determination to uproot acknowledged wrongs, and by the shilly-shally policy of his *INDISPENSABLE* chief Lieutenant. After a good deal of intrigue, planning, and plotting to perpetuate the Premiership in the hands of the blue-blood Aristocracy, Mr. DISRAELI had to be gazetted to the vacant post of pay and honor. The Nation will now have Mr. DISRAELI, the Tory *indispensable*, for Lord DERBY, as the First Lord of the Treasury, it being stated that the great Earl of the Turf, at last, recommended Mr. DISRAELI to the QUEEN in the warmest terms. The knowledge of this fact will, no doubt, remove many of the new Prime Minister's difficulties with his colleagues and his subjugated party. Few people can believe that Mr. DISRAELI would last Session have been able to *Educate* the Tories to adopt Household Suffrage had it not been through the personal influence of Lord DERBY. So long as he was the head of the Government, many of the most stubborn,—because most stupid,—Tories considered themselves safe in consenting to what was really a *Democratic measure of Reform*. They will now consent to Mr. DISRAELI's Premiership, through Lord DERBY's personal influence. I observe that the *Times* is favorable to Mr. DISRAELI's elevation. The leading journal remarks that “the Statesman honored with the duty of re-forming the Ministry has fairly won the high place he occupies. Nor could Mr. DISRAELI have accepted a lower place without a loss of dignity, which would have been unworthy of himself, and discreditable to his party.” Years sufficient to reduce youth to old age have gone by,—have recorded themselves upon the never-returning past,—since the artied Pupil of a very humble Solicitor, who occupied a dingy office in the Old Jewry, London, experienced a splendid day-dream, and wrote a very remarkable book, in which a strange extravagance of fancy was curiously combined with a rare exuberance of genius. There was drawn in this very curious work of fiction a character, that would have been absurdly grotesque, were it not invested with the charms of which poetry and romance are the fruitful parents. The book was regarded as the production of a highly-heated and half-disordered imagination,—or of an extreme development of the *mental Organs of Ideality, Hope, Acquisitiveness, and Constructiveness*. It was read, cast aside, re-printed, re-edited, laughed at, quoted, referred to, occasionally praised, and frequently censured, yet it never wholly lost its hold upon public attention. Occasionally the life and fortunes of its author invested it with a sort of half-prophetical importance, but no one thought that time would have witnessed the realization of the day-dream which obscure and untutored ambition indulged in. Yet this sober year of 1868 has witnessed the sudden and unexpected fulfillment of the longings, the hopes, and the triumphs of “Vivian Grey.” Mr. DISRAELI,—the *Educator*, and *Successful Conqueror* of the stupid-headed, stubborn Tories,—is Prime Minister of Britain. From a comparatively low station,—from a position which imparted to his career neither *eclat* nor influence,—he has risen to the proudest place which a citizen can occupy in a nation abounding with *State Idols, State Idol Worshipers, out-door-relieved royal paupers, and legions of aristocratic do-nothings*,—and has risen by the mere force of an ability as versatile as it was



vigorous,—as patient as it was laborious. Were Mr. DISRAELI the accepted leader of an advanced or revolutionary party; were he one of the men who step out of the ranks of the people to take a vacant place in the progressive efforts of the age, and thus answer the call of destiny, his success would not cause much surprise. But nearly all through his political life he adhered to the party of restriction, the possessors of public plunder, and of exclusive privilege. After fluctuating over the debatable ground which met his cautious gaze, when he entered Parliament, he chose a place apparently the most adverse that a man in his circumstances could select, and from that place he has, in spite of the most overpowering obstacles, been able to achieve the most signal and celebrated triumphs. He served, and by cunningly serving, commanded. He aided, and by aiding, controlled prejudice. He acknowledged, and by acknowledging with apparent awe, beat down caste. He made himself particularly useful as a servant, and rose gradually to the post of master. *Indispensable* to his party as a defender and a barking biter of their opponents, he has become indispensable to them as a leader, and to the able, unwearied, ingenious, and it may be added, unscrupulous politician, the haughtiest aristocracy of Europe now tender extorted obedience and involuntary veneration. The serried ranks of the Tories, so impervious to plebeian invasion and untitled influence, have at last succumbed to the enemy, against whom they swore perpetual hostility; and the tact and perseverance of a single man has effected a change, which, a year ago, seemed impossible of attainment. Great, indeed, must be the political conversion of the men who have accepted an alien by birth and creed for their leader; or, probably, it would be more correct to say, great must be the pressure which has enforced such a necessity. Coronets are of no importance; glittering gaudy baubles are contemptible; the long line of rank sinks into insignificance; hereditary power is worthless; the age is inexorable, and it must have realities for its requirements. This is literally the moral lesson of Mr. DISRAELI's elevation. For years he has been the life and the spirit of the stupid-headed party with which he was identified. Even the vigor, the territorial and Turf-influence of the House of STANLEY, were unavailing without the more gigantic Jewish element,—without “*the sharp spears and flaming swords*” of Mr. DISRAELI. The rank-and-file of obedient followers were as sheep without a shepherd when his voice did not command them. As much envied as respected; more feared than loved by the aristocracy, they had to acknowledge in him the supremacy of mental power, and in making the acknowledgment had to surrender, as abjectly as under the stern rule of merciless conquest, the prerogatives, the assumptions, and, above all, the usurped authority which were part and parcel of their privileged existence. A few months will prove whether the quiet revolution that has been apparently consummated, is real or otherwise. If the Tories prove obedient to the new Premier; if rank, and wealth, and obstinacy, and stupidity submit themselves to his guidance, it may be truly said that in a single year Britain has advanced farther in the path of progress than any other Nation of the age upon the beautiful Earth,—the rightful property, not of a few Soil-Lords, but of the whole human family.

But is the change implied in this sudden elevation of Mr. DISRAELI,—the artful adventurer,—to the post of Premier, a natural and enduring one? Have the anxiety for political power, the necessity for help,



the compulsion to rely on the only available assistance, nothing to do with the remarkable transformation?—and will there be consistency enough in the Tory ranks to endure reflection, and fortitude enough to bear with what will be regarded as humiliation? Time will answer these questions. But before looking at the probabilities of the future, it is a duty to pay homage to circumstances of the present, however transient they may prove. It is a duty to admire the genius which has soared so rapidly to such a dazzling height of power, and which, unaided and unabashed, spreads its pennons on the pinnacle of greatness as on its natural resting-place. It is a duty to admire the *Spirit of Government*, which accepts, whether willingly or unwillingly, the authority of talent, and ignores in its presence the assumptions to which tradition and prejudice give an old and venerable sanction. Whatever opinion men may entertain of Mr. DISRAELI's consistency, of his sincerity, or of his motives, there can be no controversy about the ability with which he has carried out the career of honor and fame which has placed within his grasp the richest prize his ambition could aspire to. Nor is it impossible,—should he continue in balance,—that the splendor of his position may be eclipsed by the brilliancy of his achievements. In dealing with Parliamentary Reform, Mr. DISRAELI has shown his capacity for appreciating the true political bearings of the times,—the nature and extent of the pressure of popular demands. As Democratic in sentiment and feeling as, probably, the foremost Liberal of the age, his professions are evidently only a party badge, which can be adopted or laid aside as circumstances may warrant, and his own interests suggest. He has no hereditary political faith to cherish,—no old Tory tenets to uphold,—no venerable despotic doctrine to transmit to posterity. A free-thinker when he entered the field of politics, he continues to be so still, even when he is master of the situation. If he be as anxious to retain power as he was energetic in acquiring it; if he be as pliant and politic as a leader as he was prudent and ingenious as a teacher, he may long keep his grasp upon the helm which has been so unexpectedly confided to his keeping, and may steer the bark of Government to the goal to which some political pilot must guide it soon. The great questions of the Session will necessarily be Irish ones. It is impossible to keep them in abeyance, and equally impossible to deal with them in a narrow and ungenerous spirit. If the principles enunciated by Mr. DISRAELI in the fervor of his youthful aspirations, are recognized by him in the fulfillment of his expectations, he may,—should he continue perfectly sober, and bear prosperity coolly,—accomplish truly great results. No man has levelled at the “Established State Church Robbery of Ireland” such scathing denunciations; no man has more strenuously advocated its abolition. He is also wise enough to see the necessity of a sweeping change in the “Land-Laws”; wise enough to see the necessity of conciliating the Irish people;—wise enough to know what measures they need;—wise enough to devise the plan and the means by which disaffection arising from wrongs can be eradicated, and peace and contentment secured; and if he really have power over his party—if he be not a mere make-shift or an automaton, he may perform a greater political miracle than Reform, by sweeping away the abuses which are the danger and the degradation of Ireland. The power assigned to Mr. DISRAELI can be used for the advantage of his party and the empire. There are no scruples to mar his efficiency; if he has



not sufficient conscientiousness to discharge a duty, he has the intelligence to appreciate a necessity,—to yield constitutionally to an irresistible popular pressure. In a Statesman,—surrounded with State Idol worshipers,—the latter quality may be the more practically useful one; and if the new Premier do as much for Ireland as in his anxiety for power and pelf he did for England, the Irish people will have no cause to regret the circumstances which gave him the opportunity of repairing, through even a selfish motive, some of the many wrongs for which his party are responsible. If the people of Ireland would sacrifice their religious dissensions and political differences on the altar of their common country, and demand as one man their rights of their rulers, their voice would be heard, their grievances redressed, their wants supplied, and their demands granted. Ireland, as you are aware, is blessed with a rich soil, a mild and healthy climate, ample resources for industry in Agriculture, Commerce, and Manufactures, and inhabited by a population equal in physical, intellectual, and moral qualification to Englishmen and Scotchmen; and yet with a fertile soil, a healthy climate, wonderful industrial resources, and a hard-working, thrifty, and moral people, she is one of the poorest nations in Europe. An average emigration of 70,000 annually is a portent in history, and the inevitable result of a vicious land-code and the clearance system. If our British Statesmen and Soil-Lords kept the people at home, by giving them employment, Ireland would soon have a different state of things. Millions of acres of unreclaimed land, rivers and lakes admirably suited for internal commerce, unworked mines, neglected manufactures, commodious harbors, in which, with a few exceptions, a trading vessel is seldom seen, form a wide field of enterprise for Irishmen who have abundance of gold lying idle in banks. While Statesmen and the public Press should steadfastly and earnestly advocate the development of Irish industrial resources, there are three questions,—the settlement of which is of paramount importance to the public,—which should constantly engage their attention. Till the relations between Soil-Lord and Tenant are satisfactorily adjusted; till Education is placed on such a footing as to meet the wants and wishes of the great majority of the population; till the Church Establishment is abolished, and the temporalities converted to useful and national purposes,—in a word, till these three questions are finally settled on the broad principle of equal justice to all,—Ireland can never expect to be a peaceful, contented, and happy country. These are the canker-worms that prey upon the vitals of the Irish nation, and destroy all social union, and that impede the physical, intellectual, moral, and political progress of the population.

The elevation of Mr. DISRAELI to the first place in the British Government has, of course, given rise to many sharp ransacking criticisms. It is just as easy to construct a generous panegyric as to compose a sharp, biting philippic on the new Premier's past career; and it is not necessary for an impartial public writer to relapse into a despairing mood, and to deny that political virtue and vice have any substantial existence, or any influence in the production of beneficial results, if it is carefully remembered that there is much truth and as much falsehood both in the unmeasured eulogies and the invectives to which the author of "Vivian Grey" has been lately subjected. No doubt there is something peculiarly engaging, extremely interesting, if not almost noble, in the mere contemplation of a strong plebeian



intellect, long sustained by a stern, inflexible will, steadily forecasting a distant and difficult triumph, conquering social embarrassments, and living down disqualifications of birth, of fortune, and of race, gathering secret strength from humiliating failure, and, by a dexterous combination of scheming suppleness and arrogant audacity, moulding like paste a fierce hereditary aristocracy into passive instruments of personal ambition. The Tory party, however, made a bad bargain when they engaged the supple services of Mr. DISRAELI. He did their dirty work of badgering Sir ROBERT PEEL with all the slanderous venom that their malignity could desire, but they placed themselves under a master when they contemplated the purchase of a sharp-tongued slave. For years he kept them together, and gave them a semblance of power; but when they attempted to govern the Nation upon their own *stale* principles, they found themselves inveigled in snares, entangled in difficulties, and finally compelled to agree to propositions which they devoted their lives to oppose. The retirement of Lord DERBY,—the distinguished patron of the Turf,—left them no choice but to accept their betrayer for their chief, and he has again and again placed them in a position of humiliation and defeat. As there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, so there is, at least now and then, but a single stage from the ridiculous to the sublime. Such a career as Mr. DISRAELI's, had it not terminated in triumph, would have been a good joke; as it is, the sweeping success spoils the satire which treats of this wondrous tale of adventure. What has been frequently said respecting the possible designs of *Total-Self-Existence* in permitting the prosperity of the unjust,—the wicked, the vile,—in order to give forcible illustration of the small value of excessive wealth, may, by the envious and malevolent, be transferred to political distinction, and those who envy and hate,—the once poor,—Mr. DISRAELI, may imagine they see in *his rise to unexampled prosperity* a conspicuous proof and example of how small *estimation* is mere success in the eye of Mother Nature, by bestowing it on the most untrustworthy of all British Statesmen. But, after all, the occasion scarcely justifies these virtuous heroics. Mr. DISRAELI is neither so much above nor so much below ordinary precedent or rule. He is indeed simply a very clever person, employing his cleverness often to originate, and always to use great opportunities. His great speciality, as the saying is, consists in not being too clever, or rather his peculiar gift is in discovering and realizing the exact point at which his cleverness is just beginning to run away with him. There have been several epochs in his curious career when he was on the very verge of destroying his own influence, and of fatally ruining his probabilities of promotion for ever; but he had the rare power of seeing this, as well as by-standers, and his masterly retreats from portions of himself, and his manœuvres in the face of his own repeated blunders, are, in a certain sense, the most remarkable features of his political strategy,—of his frequent paltry juggling, and evasive shuffling. Mr. DISRAELI, or rather a certain portion of him, may often be an enigma to most people; but there has always been one who understood every region of his mental constitution,—every organ and every group of organs in his peculiar Brain, and that was Mr. DISRAELI, the author of “Vivian Grey.” When he failed in the House of the Common men, and ventured upon the audacious insolence of prophesying his own success; when he measured swords, or rather exchanged ribaldry, with the *great* and *mighty* O'CONNELL, spattering the Irish



LIBERATOR with his slimy vituperation, in return for the severity that analyzed him; when he ventured on the measureless impudence of affecting to persuade the great Tory party, as well as Lord GEORGE BENTINCK himself, that the said great horse-racing man was a magnificent statesman;—when he selfishly took advantage of the exasperation of the Tory *Soil-Lords* to make a position for himself by ceaselessly worrying and insulting Sir ROBERT PEEL; even when he soared to the sublime,—boast shall it be termed, or confession?—that for eight long years he had been a secret convert to the semi-Democratic doctrine of Household Suffrage, and that he and his territorial chief colleague had during that period been *privately* and *secretly* *Educating* their party into accepting a policy which all the time they were publicly denouncing as the wildest frenzy of revolution,—in each and every one of these perilous phases of his career Mr. DISRAELI watched the rising movements of the public pressure-tide,—the patient forbearance of the down-trodden millions, and thoroughly knew himself in every department of his complicated Brain. And to know one's-self implies a perception of self-ignorance and of the vanity which accompanies ignorance, and of the peculiar ignorance which runs side by side with extreme ambition and inordinate selfishness. To know one's-self is, as a general rule, the surest way to know something of other people, and from the most intimate experience of Mr. DISRAELI, the poor gentleman of the Press, Mr. DISRAELI, the smart successful party leader, has gained a very large insight into everybody else, or at least into everybody similarly organized or possessing the same type of Brain as the author of “Vivian Grey.” Mr. DISRAELI managed and marshalled his party because he first had acquired the Science and the Art of knowing and managing himself. Mr. DISRAELI is a very profound PHRENOLOGIST as well as a very polished and flexible politician. He also knows a good deal about that most marvelous Science called ELECTRO-BIOLOGY, and has, indeed, operated with singular success for many years upon the stupid party. It is, moreover, in the study of man, as in Comparative Anatomy. Given a bone, and an expert can build up a complicated skeleton. Given a whole and entire man,—whatever may be the proportions and arrangements of the different regions of his Brain,—and you have a fair sample of ordinary humanity. There are, of course, ill-generated, ill-born individualities thrown into society, by inferior parental conditions,—faultless monsters and exceptional varieties of character, tending here and there to an excess—as of virtue so of vice—impracticable day-dreamers, builders of “Castles in the air,” and what are called consistent men,—defiant men, furious fanatics, or foaming fools, who believe in stationary views, or stand-still opinions, in ancient traditions, in definite conclusions of class legislation, in the local convictions of Soil-Lords, in Tory moralities, in expedient principles, in fashionable verities, and all that sort of things, or even in party straightforwardness, and in pelf-hunting, conscientiousness, and fidelity; but Mr. DISRAELI knows well, by his internal *self-reflector*, that the political world,—steeped in controlling circumstances,—is not made up of these characters,—that the men who surround him are not uniformly composed of these peculiar elements. And most assuredly he has had sufficient strength of mind to act upon his knowledge,—to reduce his perceptions of possibilities to practice. This strength,—blended with audacity and excessive presumption,—is not given to or found in the possession of every man. It may be safely asserted that



no other living statesman in Britain can surpass, or even equal the new Premier in his scornful estimate of human nature; Mr. DISRAELI is a thorough adept at "measuring other men's corn in his own bushel;" and being a practical man, he invariably treats human beings according to his convictions regarding himself. It only remains, however, to see whether, as has often happened before, too much success will not generate too much sense of security. Mr. DISRAELI can hardly improve, or, I might say, keep up, the superb audacity of his avowal that he, the great Tory leader, had for nearly a decade of years been Educating his party into the Democratic doctrines of the "People's Charter." Even blind, stupid worms may turn, especially if those who tread on them are very fond, as Mr. DISRAELI really is, of continually assuring worms of their vermicular nature. When a practised dissembler declines or forgets to dissemble, "the evil eye may be then beginning to do its destructive work. It was when HAMAN went forth joyful, overflowing with gladness, and sat down to banquet with the King and Queen, that his fearful fall was close at hand." I am not concerned, however, with soothsaying or omens, but with the present day, and its sufficient good or evil.

If we really wish to comprehend the curious complications and apparent contradictions of Mr. DISRAELI, we shall be helped by a careful contemplation of the career of his great rival, the distinguished leader of the Opposition. Parallels where they occur are not half so valuable as contrasts in political biography. While Mr. DISRAELI has risen to the Premiership of Britain from an humble Solicitor's dingy office in the Old Jewry, it is instructive to look at Mr. GLADSTONE, who has only managed, in spite or by virtue of his education at Eton and Oxford, to show that the most brilliant gifts of Nature, and the most convenient and fortunate adaptation of opportunities, can command failure with a uniformity as admirable as his great rival's success. What are the causes of this? Is all this to be attributed to a political or a natural law?—if so, it is a very melancholy one. Or to social circumstances?—if so, they are instructive and memorable enough. It would almost seem that Mr. GLADSTONE has as accurately forecast consequences, and has as nicely adjusted means to ends, as Mr. DISRAELI. Only in the one case the calculation was made to win, in the other case to lose. There is nothing that both Mr. DISRAELI and Mr. GLADSTONE have not with equal skill and pertinacity moulded to their several ends of life; only in the one it was moulded to succeed personally, to secure pecuniary advantages,—in the other to uphold principles with integrity and to fail in grasping the people's gold. Each has managed, with admirable felicity, to frustrate and disappoint great expectations. Mr. GLADSTONE was born in the very purple of political life, and nursed on the knees of Toryism. He was dedicated almost from his birth to the service of the Tory party,—or rather to the service of his fellow-countrymen. He entered into public life under the most favorable auspices. While his rival was floundering through the bog of social severity and scrambling through literary laboriousness, "the silver swan of the future was sailing on the clear and placid stream of the noblest of human careers,—his fellow-countrymen's service,—and composing learned treatises, seasoned with the purest Academical salt." Are we, then, to despair of the lovers of Justice among mankind, and are we going to say, or to conclude that the most fatal of gifts is to have a large development of CONSCIENTIOUSNESS,



and to close with the disgusting conclusion that Mr. GLADSTONE is where he is only because he is too proud, too noble, and too honorable for the crooked courses of this common every-day political world,—where leading men wear the honors won by their ancestors,—where nobility is held by patent,—and where a piece of parchment is a much more portable instrument than virtue shielded by integrity? I am very loth to say so; but yet the facts are impressive enough, and well calculated to command National attention.

I am, dear Sir, your cordial co-operator in the great and not to-be-resisted cause of Equal Justice,

JOHN SCOTT.

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## L E T T E R V.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
February 28th, 1868.

The Right Hon. B. DISRAELI, Prime  
Minister of Britain.

DEAR SIR,—The authority of names or of offices is nothing to me; I judge all men by their actions and conduct; and must hate a knave of my own party as much as I despise a tricky schemer of another. I cannot consent that any man or body of men shall do what they please. I claim the right of examining all public measures, and, if they deserve it, of censuring them. As I never saw much power possessed without some abuse, I take upon me to watch those that have it; and to acquit or expose them, according as they apply it to the good of their country, or to their own crooked purposes. I experience a strong sincere desire to teach you some important lessons in the Literary Art of free, fearless, criticism. I desire to speak to you very plainly, but at the same time very pointedly and penetratingly. I have your mental melioration in view, and must, therefore, if possible, try and reach your innermost sensibilities. You are in the habit of seeing everything so very far off, and in combination with everything else possible and impossible, that in fact, you are apt to see nothing of the present; you do not even see Truth itself, because everything is so mixed up and melts into such complete evanescence that matters of fact are lost to you. It is very evident that you lack the grand faculty of appreciating or of appropriating facts. There is a very general feeling prevailing throughout the Nation, that you are, however, capable of doing anything, and that it is hard to prevent you from doing anything that you may be pleased to do. I am not one of those who cherish this opinion of you. In my humble estimation, you are not a hopeless case; and, therefore, anticipate being successful in your conversion. But, if I should fail in this, the letters which I intend to address to you through the Press, will, at the very least establish a beneficial precedent, by showing an impartial public example on the part of a British citizen, who participates largely in the pleasure resulting from seeing a gentleman of the Press promoted to the highest political position in the Empire. The permanence of the pleasure experienced by literary men at seeing a distinguished member of the Fraternity elevated to the most dignified trust that a subject can secure, must, however, depend upon your duly considering yourself to be the Premier of Britain, and not the Premier of the stand-still Tory party. To confirm and perpetuate the satisfac-



tion felt at your successful triumph, you must let the Nation see that you clearly perceive the visible difference between the two offices, and guard against becoming giddy in your high position. It frequently happens that men of your type of Brain, who are vain and full of self-conceit, instead of being egotistical, envious, and obdurate, as would appear very likely, are extremely gracious, benevolent, good companions, and even good friends, and happy to be of service to their admirers. Thinking themselves sincerely beloved by all, they naturally love their supposed admirers, and help them forward whenever they can succeed; and besides they judge this suitable to the superiority with which they account themselves favored by Fortune. They love society because they believe the whole of society to be full of their name; and are gentle in their manners, praising themselves inwardly for their condescension, as well as for knowing how to adapt their greatness to familiarity with the little individuals around them. And I have also often observed that men like Lord DERBY and yourself, found growing in their own conceit, grow likewise in benignity. Moreover, the certitude they have of their own importance and of the unanimity of their admirers in confessing it, takes from their manners all harshness, because no one who is contented with himself and mankind is ever harsh in manner, and thus it generates in them such tranquillity, that sometimes they gradually become to look like really modest persons. Lord DERBY's passive and timid resignation brings Tory Government to a final close in Britain. By being commissioned to form a new Ministry you have at last won the prize of your consummate Tory tact and indefatigable perseverance. You have taken possession of the object of your anxious pursuit; you have attained the highest political position. Could you resolve to discard the consideration of every interest, temporary, local, or private, that impedes the general good, your duties would be discharged with facility. You would then discover that there is a Science in legislation, which the details of office and the intrigues of popular assemblies will never communicate or cultivate;—a Science of which the principles must be sought for in the constitution of human nature, and in the general laws which regulate the course of human affairs; and which, if ever, in consequence of the progress of profound reflection, political Science should be enabled in your head and hands to assume that ascendancy in the Government of Britain, which has hitherto been maintained by the mere incident of birth, combined with the unregulated desires and caprices of a few leading individuals, it may produce more perfect and beneficial results than have yet been realized in the experience of mankind. Be this as it may, it is certain that you will not meet with any grave difficulty in the mere re-adjustment of the Cabinet, the form of which you have already moulded, and the policy of which you have already shaped, to accomplish the purposes of your own expanding and extensive ambition.

When Parliament resumed business this Session, the two great political parties contending for power and pay stood again face to face; the Tories, with a resolution to maintain the position they have made great sacrifices for; and the Liberals, indignant at the adoption of their own weapons by their enemies. It would have been extremely agreeable to the inclination of the former, without doubt, if the Session were allowed to be a mere interregnum, devoted to preparations for a graceful dissolution of the existing system of representation in the



House of the Common men, and to electioneering manœuvres with respect to the new one which is to take place; but there were measures which the Government stood pledged to produce, and upon no pretence could they be allowed to baulk the expectations of the people. Your Bill, introduced upon the 13th of February, for the prevention of corrupt practices at elections, is a mere stop-gap to public indignation at monstrous offences which investigation have brought to light. This plague-spot must be rooted out from every constituency; and although we shall probably never be able to accomplish all that may be desirable in the matter, still we must do what we can. Do not our past and present experiences prove, that, as far as any Parliamentary enactment can correct an evil, that of bribery and corruption at elections would be accomplished by the Ballot? But neither Tories nor aristocratic Whigs like the Ballot, as connected with the electoral system, although they find it excellently efficacious for its purposes in their clubs. You undertook to put a check upon corrupt practices at Parliamentary elections, and in a meek and kindly spirit attempted to enlist the support of men of all parties upon the occasion. It seems to be overlooked by Parliament that the object to which its exertions should be directed is the suppression of bribery, whereas your Government Bill contemplates its continuance. Your Bill may be regarded in the light of an attempt to correct an evil by a round-about way, which might be abolished by a direct and simple process. If every elector could shield his vote from public observation, the object of representation would be more nearly effected than it can be under any modification of the open system. There would be little or no bribery,—because, willing as a candidate might be to corrupt the electors, he would be unwilling to trust a man who, base enough to accept a bribe, would also be base enough to cheat his corruptor at the Ballot-box, where his vote could be recorded unseen. Government should look, not to a continuance of bribery and corruption,—as they do by your Bill,—but to its extinction. Instead of appointing three new Judges to investigate charges, Government should put an end to the possibility of them, by accepting the Ballot at once; for the Ballot must eventually be come to, however long the prejudices and the interests of public men may defer the time. You are not unjustly proud of having successfully taught the Tories to appreciate the question of Reform; but there is a class of men very much dissatisfied with the teaching and its results, and who would be glad to recover their old position. That not being possible, they may, nevertheless, decline going further, and set up some wooden idol to worship, rather than follow their ingenious leader, who has taken political power out of their hands to give it to the working classes. Regarded as a section of the Reform Measures, the question has stood over from last Session, and in the Spring of 1867 the Ministry presented the general outline of the scheme. They then proposed that the trial of controverted elections should no longer remain under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Common men, but that, whenever a return was challenged in due form, two Assessors should be despatched to the locality affected, and there hold a Court to investigate the allegations of mal-practices. If an appeal were made from their decision, the House of the Common men might appoint a Select Committee to re-hear the case; but if the decision of the Assessors were not challenged within a specified time it became binding. The plan was a great innovation. Parliament has uniformly displayed a jealous



anxiety to maintain unimpaired its exclusive jurisdiction ; and to ask for a partial surrender of its powers was a bold step. The Government had originally intended that the scheme should form part of the new Reform Bill, they soon discovered the expediency of separating the two subjects. When the Ten Minutes' Bill was abandoned and its successor brought in, the clauses relating to bribery were omitted ; but shortly before the Easter recess " The Corrupt Practices at Elections Bill " was introduced as a distinct measure.

Your Bribery Bill is, of course a failure, and one of a peculiar and unexpected kind, through the determination of the Judges not to mix themselves up with political squabbles, and decide the election cases which Parliamentary Committees have hitherto adjudicated. You clearly see the difficulty of getting the House of the Common men to consent to allowing its members to be subjected to such penalties as incapacity to sit for seven years, or for life (as has been proposed), by the decision of any tribunal inferior in public estimation to Parliament. The House of the Common men is right in principle in desiring to keep such a jurisdiction in its own hands ; but it has hitherto egregiously failed in making its Election Committees at all satisfactory or reliable. The fact is, that our Electoral System is an absurd one. It is contrived so as to make bribery, treating, and intimidation common and customary offences. It is notorious that a large portion of the House of the Common men is returned by such means, and places by the dozen could be named in which they occur with clock-work regularity each time a vacancy has to be filled. The great families prefer electoral corruption to an honest expression of popular opinion ; and so long as they retain rotten boroughs, and keep the tenant-farmers in a state of thralldom, no laws against bribery or against intimidation will avail. A fairer distribution of seats, a further reduction of the County Franchise, and the Ballot, would make our elections much more free from criminal influence or coercion, and no bribery laws will be worth the parchment on which they are written until such improvements are made. Mr. Bright justly pointed out the true remedies,—large constituencies and secret voting ; and no one can gainsay him when he remarked that " the show of forty, fifty, sixty, or eighty petitions is an absolute disgrace to the British Parliament." It is, indeed, a very remarkable instance of the force of habit in reconciling a nation to disreputable abominations that such a system of iniquity should be so lightly viewed. The upper classes, who manufacture the fashionable morals of society, do not regard bribery as at all criminal. They want it, as they want the more brutal offence of intimidation, and they sincerely pity any member of their order who suffers inconvenience through being found out. By degrees the mass of the people will come to a determination to put this evil down. The wiser politicians all know that it belongs to a system, and will endure as long as that system lasts ; but a great portion of the middle class is not yet sufficiently alive to the enormous importance of making all electoral arrangements honest, as one of the best safeguards against the peculiar dangers of Democratic growth. If the upper classes persist in rendering them dishonest for their own selfish purposes, it is to be feared that some corresponding manifestation of dishonesty will take place in the lower ranks. There is no other civilized nation which is so conceited of its own institutions, and of all its modes of public action, as Britain is. This conceit has much to do with the electoral enormities of Britain,



as well as with the discontent of Ireland. The upper classes of Britain do not like to bring their own minds to confess the defects of the Constitution, while they are perpetually gratifying their vanity by praising it; and a large portion of the middle class lack the moral courage to think right when the world of fashion and frivolity decides in favor of anything wrong. A few years ago, we stood foremost in all Europe for our Parliamentary arrangements, bad as they were. Now, we are being left behind, and we have the worst system of any civilized country that possesses a Parliament at all; and our home system is much worse than that of our colonies, which have followed the advice given long ago by Reformers who have not yet obtained a fair hearing in their own land. Electioneering Agents know full well that when once a constituency has been corrupted, it is next to impossible to make it sound again; and yet, at the time when we are bringing large masses of people of slender means into the enjoyment of the Franchise, we permit old pernicious arrangements to exist, and fresh ones,—like the ratepaying clause,—to be made which will facilitate corruption to an enormous extent. The passing of the Bill for preventing bribery at elections cannot be properly regarded as a principal condition precedent to an early dissolution of Parliament; but it is of the utmost possible importance that the present House of the Commons should, before the Session comes to an end, pass some measure intended to produce that result. I need not at present further discuss the provisions of the Bill as it stands. The soundness of its principles and the effectiveness of its details must be tested by experience; but it is pretty obvious that, if matters are left in their present position, we shall next Spring have such a crop of election petitions as has been seldom or ever seen after a general election. To what extent the new voters will be bribable no one knows, but unless their virtue is much greater than that of the old voters, which there is no particular ground to expect, and unless a degree of unanimity prevails in the constituencies, of which as yet we have no experience, there is every ground to believe that there will be fierce contests all over the country, and that the price of the judicious people who hold out to the last with a well-founded expectation of being handsomely paid when their services are required, will be highly satisfactory to themselves, and to every one who is interested in exciting and remunerative contests afterwards in Parliamentary Committee Rooms. It must, moreover be remembered and admitted that the Bill must be an abominably bad one indeed, if it does not effect a considerable improvement in the present state of the law. It is difficult to imagine anything so expensive, so open to every kind of abuse, so little calculated to do Justice, or to satisfy the public that Justice has been done (which is hardly less important), as the present system. To be rid of that will always be so much gained. The good and the bad parts of a new system will be gradually disclosed by experience, and its evils will be much more easily reformed than of an established abuse like the existing election committees.

Lord DERBY has resigned, and you have been called upon by the QUEEN to form a new Administration. You have reached the highest point of your ambition, and the greatest men of the Tory party who affected to despise you whilst they consented to follow your leading when Lord DERBY held you by the hand, are said to be willing to support your Ministry. You have passed through a sudden state of political consternation to a triumph; and the triumph is all the



greater on account of the known forces by whom your ascendancy was opposed. By dint of extraordinary perseverance you have enforced acknowledgment of your superior abilities, and have overcome obstacles which to less resolute men would have appeared, and been, insurmountable ; and you now stand at the head and command of an Administration, looking down with an air of superiority upon men who were once of greater mark and likelihood, and that would willingly have obstructed your progress, and were indeed expected by their partisans to do so. Ridiculed and constantly hooted when you first rose to address the House of the Common men, as though you were a mere coxcomb and silly pretender, whom the wits and sages of the period were unable to endure, you have made your way with the spirit of your own " Vivian Grey," who " had a smile for a friend and a sneer for the world," in your effort to rise to the Government of the British Empire ; and the result justifies the undying faith which you maintained in your own principle and innate power. Sir ROBERT PEEL despised you, when you would have placed your services at the command of the PEEL Administration, and in less than five years afterwards you had your revenge upon PEEL. Lord DERBY, wise and sagacious in selecting adherents, discovered the use of your determined spirit, took advantage of it, adopted, and never forsook you. On both occasions when Lord DERBY was required to form an Administration, one of the conditions with his party was that you should lead the Commons ; and, although Ultra-Tories and men of high aristocratic connexions fretted and fumed, moaned and threatened defection, the Premier clung to his friend, conscious, no doubt, that Ultra-Tory indignation could not be half so injurious to his Ministry as the rejected politician might become in Opposition. But this was not all the cause for Lord DERBY's undeviating support of you. The great DERBY was well aware that in all the Tory ranks there was not to be found a man of greater ability, more thoughtful in council, more impressive in debate. While you on your own part knew well the immense value of Lord DERBY's support. " At this moment," says your own hero, " how many a powerful noble only wants wit to be a Minister ; and what wants Vivian Grey to attain the same end ? That noble's influence. When two persons can so materially assist each other why are they not brought together ?" Lord DERBY may have been a reader of " Vivian Grey," and have drawn useful conclusions from the reading. And when the great Lord DERBY, reduced, unhappily, by bodily affliction, was obliged to lay down the authority the Queen had trusted to his hands, there cannot be a doubt of his having done the best thing possible for his party in recommending her Majesty to give it to you. There are other men, no doubt, who believe they have a better right to it, and who, up to the moment when it was disclosed in Parliament that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in communication with her Majesty, were under the agreeable impression that the staff of office would be theirs. But Lord DERBY's decision was right. If a Tory Administration is to be saved, you are the man to save it. This result can be achieved only by great concessions to the Liberal spirit of the age ; and you may be inclined to do this, and to further educate the Tory Peers and squires up to the required concession point. Lord STANLEY may have had a laudable ambition to become Premier, but his prudent father did not recommend his immediate advancement ; and, consequently, as you refused to occupy a secondary



position in a new Cabinet, there was no alternative but to call you to the first. Your Administration is very weak in the House of the Lords. It is in the House of the Common men, however, that the battles of the Administration will be fought, and you may be exercising a shrewd judgment in keeping the best of your forces there. Great questions await discussion and settlement, and unless tact and sagacity are displayed, you will be thrown down before you are many months settled in your seat. The Irish questions will bring your power and authority over your party to the test. If you do not make great concession, Mr. GLADSTONE will defeat you.

In the anomalously-constituted political machine of Britain, an injury or displacement of a mere glittering speck on the exterior surface is calculated to produce a greater disturbance than the loss of a balance wheel or the snapping asunder of the mainspring itself. The gout of a Peer is deemed of greater importance than the agonies of a nation. The toes of Lord DERBY are objects of greater interest in the British Parliament than the woes of Ireland; and, therefore, the said Great British Parliament practically proclaims,—“Better that Ireland should remain the prey of her present oppressors,—better that famine and pestilence, Soil-Lord exterminations, and mad exhausting sedition should ravage the third part of the United Queendom, and paralyze the industrial and moral energies of five millions of Queen VICTORIA’s plebeian subjects,—than that the gouty limbs of an antiquated Tory Lord should be incommoded by a discussion of the causes which have made the overwhelming majority of the Irish people anxious and eager to dissolve their political connexion with England and Scotland. Tuesday, the 25th of February, was appointed for a great debate on the Irish question. The discussion which was certain to result from the motion of Mr. MAGUIRE, M.P. for Cork, would at least have the effect of calling public attention to the subject, even if it led to no further benefit to the wretched and long-suffering Irish people. There was a distinct promise on the part of Ministers that on that evening Government was ready to reveal the measures contemplated by the official advisers of the Queen for the removal of the most flagrant political and social scandal in Christendom,—the unparalleled physical wretchedness of the great body of the Irish population. This, I say, was the programme of the House of the Common men for Tuesday, the 25th February; and in spite of the experience of many previous disappointments, considerable public expectation was excited as to the nature of the Ministerial plans for the redress of Irish wrongs, which it was promised would be revealed on that evening. But once more Ireland has been compelled to wait the convenience of the coroneted political quacks by whom she is tormented, and once more the patient and stolid English public has had to submit to the baulking of its legitimate anxiety, because a single member of the privileged caste has confessed his incapacity for the office which rank, wealth, and national flunkeyism, rather than intellectual or moral fitness, had appointed him to fill. Because Lord DERBY has at length thought proper to resign the Premiership the consideration of the condition of the Irish question is indefinitely postponed. In answer to Mr. MAGUIRE, who was naturally chagrined at the abandonment of the appointed debate, and the prolongation of the anxiety to which the Ministerial promise of a scheme for the settlement of the Irish difficulty gave birth, Lord STANLEY distinctly stated that the Government could fix no day for the



resumption of the subject. And thus, for no other cause than the incapacity of a single aristocrat, millions of human beings are to be kept waiting for the redress to which they are justly entitled, a gross and infamous national scandal is to be endured, and a great political peril has to be incurred. Touching this resignation of the Premiership by Lord DERBY, to which I have already referred, a few important questions deserve to be considered. Why did not his Lordship resign before Shrove Tuesday? Why put off so important a step till the eve of what promised to be the most critical and exciting discussion of the Session? It must be admitted that Lord DERBY's health was much worse three or four weeks before the 25th of February than it was at that time, yet he did not then resign; though, if he had taken this patriotic step, ample time would have been afforded for the appointment of his successor. His Lordship, so I am confidently informed, is much better than he was a few weeks back. Why, then, not continue to hold the high office which he filled, until at least the first discussion of the Government measure for dealing with the Irish difficulty had been gone through? How and by what means did the *Idea* originate with you, that Lord DERBY's resignation, on the very evening that the discussion on the *Causes* of the condition of Ireland was to commence, would certainly produce such a public *Shock*, and excite a *Sensation* so wide-spread, as would necessarily break the force of the universal interest cherished with regard to the expected Irish debate? Your strong ambitious desire to attain your own personal objects originated this idea, and you have been successful in planting it in other Brains. It so happens, however, that the circumstances of the present year were more than usually favorable to a fair discussion of the causes of the condition of Ireland. But, whatever may have been the principal design of it, the Earl of DERBY has resigned the Premiership,—the Irish debate, which has been postponed for the last half century, has been further delayed,—the Queen is in the Isle of Wight,—you have had to go all the way from London to the favored spot, to obtain the Royal sanction to your appointment as Lord DERBY's successor, and the House of Common men has had to adjourn for days, to wait the convenience of the exalted parties, without whose guidance and contrivance the greatness of Britain,—it is supposed by the State Idol worshipers,—could not survive a single day.

Now, as it must have been well known, both at court, and to his own colleagues, that Lord DERBY was about to resign, arrangements ought to have been made for the accession of his successor, without a single moment's loss of precious time. Under the circumstances you were the only possible successor of the Earl of DERBY. The Tories have no other man qualified for the post. The causes that have given them wealth and social influence have denied them the Brains, without which, in these days, not even an assembly of footmen can be controlled. Indeed, the whole great British Aristocracy is at this moment portentously deficient in intellectual power. Even the great Whig families, who at all times were better endowed with Brains than their rivals, are under the necessity of placing themselves under the leadership of a Commoner. Mr. GLADSTONE at the head of the Whigs and true Liberals, and yourself at the head of the Tories, are striking proofs of that sterility of intellectual power with which Nature has smitten and cursed the hereditary oppressors of the English, Irish, and Scotch people. How long the purchased guidance of such men as



yourself and Mr. GLADSTONE will avail to avert from the privileged caste the downfall which their mental imbecility clearly indicates as their inevitable destiny, is a question which time only can certainly answer. At this moment, however, there can be no doubt as to your title, from the Tory point of view, to the first place in the leadership of the party; for if it had not been for you, there would be now no Tory party in existence. You have been the principal shepherd and shield of the Tories for the last twenty-two years—ever since the patriotic apostasy of the late Sir ROBERT PEEL,—you have rallied and led, encouraged and admonished, restrained and educated, the stupid-brained squires, who were discomfited and demoralized by the defection of their former leader. For your skill as a party general, you are deserving of the highest reward which your party can bestow. Therefore, to pass you over for the sake of a clever mediocrity, such as Lord STANLEY, or such a transparent political apprentice as the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, would be to convict the Tory party of ingratitude as well as of ignorance, and to prove to the world that their minds are as black as their Brains are stiff. This, however, is a charge to which the Tories are less open than the Whigs, who have never yet allowed a “Commoner,” however brilliant his career or magnificent his intellect, to rise to the first place among men,—that being always reserved for some intellectual mediocrity allied to one or the other of the great Whig houses. On the other hand, the Tories, within the memory of thousands now living, had three Prime Ministers who rose from comparatively obscure and plebeian families,—namely, CANNING, PEEL, and yourself. True, they are charged with having killed CANNING, by their secret conspiracies against him. As for PEEL, he deserted them; therefore they are, to some extent, excused for having persecuted him. As for yourself, it remains to be seen how they will comport themselves under your leadership, which is a practical proclamation that the great British Aristocracy is an intellectually emasculated caste, with just enough Brains to subordinate pride to self-preservation, and accept the guidance of a brilliant scourge, rather than the leadership of a high-born noodle, who, in ordinary times, would doubtless be preferred to the most accomplished plebeian statesman, orator, and administrator that ever lived. Time only can tell what sort of a Prime Minister you will make. If, however, I may anticipate the future from the past, I am justified in predicting that you will endeavor to hold your place,—not so much by pandering to the silly prejudices of your followers, as by timely concessions,—in appearance at least,—of some of the just demands of the working classes. You generally know well which way the current of public opinion is driving. You know that the living forces of the age are all on the side of political progress. You can well discriminate between the living and the dead,—between the real and the sham,—between the Tory counterfeit and the genuine working man. You know the difference between the great “British Lion” and the Tory donkey, that vainly attempts to assume the lion’s mien, and to emulate his roar. True, Mr. GATHORNE HARDY may mistake the bray of the donkey for the roar of the lion,—the squeak of a pot-house clique of guzzling politicians, who call themselves “Conservative Working Men,” for the mighty voice of the British Democracy: but you are too intelligent to be the servile dupe of such a palpable deception as that palmed upon the Home Secretary a few days ago. Therefore, if the people will manfully do their duty, more Democratic measures of Re-



form than any hitherto passed will mark the term of your Premiership, if that Premiership should last for six months.

You have undertaken to govern the British nation without a Parliamentary majority, and Lord RUSSELL is both amazed and very angry at your audacious boldness. But as it has been shrewdly observed, "the House of the Common men, like 'King HARRY,' likes above all things a man." And certainly you are no milksop. You are a Trimmer, a Tadpole, a Taper; but you are resolute in what you do, and you have hitherto contrived to enlist the sympathies of all the sections of the Tory partizans (with some half-dozen individual exceptions), however strongly your proceedings may have been at variance with Tory principles and traditions. Lord RUSSELL does not like the "educational" process which you have been carrying out, and which he calls "a course of deception;" adding that "it ought to prevent any reliance being placed in a Government which openly avow that they do not mean what they say." Lord RUSSELL is right in thinking that a Government should be honest, clear, and explicit. But you are right also, nevertheless; for if you had been as frank in the exposition of your ideas and intentions as Lord RUSSELL and strict justice require, there would have been no Reform of Parliament last year, and the people forming the Nation in an uproar might still be petitioning for it in vain. The Tories would not let Lord RUSSELL nor Mr. GLADSTONE carry a Reform Bill, but under your discipline their prejudices were surrendered with the meekness of cooing doves. Lord RUSSELL's anger I can understand, but is his Lordship able to say that he himself has never in the course of his political life had occasion to acknowledge a change of opinion under an accession of wisdom, or the presentation of a subject under a different light to what he had seen it before? Did he never hear of the little boy who wrote "No Popery" on a door and then ran away? Two blacks, however, do not make one white. You are chargeable with having done what when you were in Opposition you had declared ought not to be done. You have made a more extensive Reform of Parliament than was considered possible by your rivals; but, as Lord RUSSELL said, "it is unexampled in the history of party that such a deception, or such an education, if you choose so to call it, should be resorted to." This is undeniably true; and the Nation does not fail to observe and estimate the sacrifice of political character involved in the proceeding; but there is this difference in the national sentiment and that of the Ex-Minister; that the latter has reference to the interests of "party" only, whilst the Nation, preferring its own interests, takes the good which is offered without caring much about the political complexion of the party presenting it.

Your policy, mysterious and complex as it may seem to some observers, is simple enough. Not having a majority in the House of the Common men you must do without it. The vitality of your Administration depends upon your ability to soften resentments and lure some of your opponents to your side by every golden charm. If you can keep the party at your back in order, you may reckon upon success with some degree of confidence, for still in the Liberal ranks there is a lamentable want of cohesion, through which they are weaker than they might be: and you know that to divide is to conquer, and you await with peculiar patience and silence the result of unsettled opinion in the adverse camp. But you are not altogether silent. You have frequently said of late, that, you will "give the country Liberal measures,"



and you have adverted to the Reform Bill as affording an assurance that you mean, in this instance, what you say. The words had an effect upon the House of the Common men. They may mean, however, anything or nothing, but they startled the Opposition, and occasioned wonder and amazement to some of the old Tories, who have not yet received a sufficient "education" from you to enable them to comprehend your purposes. But they indicate a man of intention, whether it be for good or evil; a man of business, who will not go to sleep at his post and neglect the business of the Nation for the sake of inglorious repose. The people dislike and object to your Tory principles, but they like your courage and pluck; you are a man whom there is no discredit in accepting a service from, and whom there is pleasure in opposing when you are wrong, for the British people do not break butterflies upon a wheel; and when they have to fight, prefer a manly combatant to a coward. But there will be in your present Government the same fatal malady that afflicted the Government of Lord DERBY, its weakness in Parliamentary power. You have not a majority on your side of the House to enable you to carry on the business in the way it ought to be carried on. The blame of the present state of things must be, however, apportioned; but it is a great calamity, and most detrimental to the public interest. The Government should be carried on by a majority of the House of the Common men, then we should not have the wavering uncertain policy we have recently witnessed. The uncertainty which exists among Liberal partizans is to be deplored, because it is only from this cause, the strength of Toryism is derived. The ground-plan of your Premiership will be derived from your own Mr. Taper's explanation of a "sound Conservative Government," which, according to that eminent placeman, means "Tory men and Whig measures." Things have much altered since *Mr. Taper's* time, or he would have admitted something more into his programme than is comprehended under the term of Whig. Lord RUSSELL, with his head full of history, says the course of conduct pursued by you in carrying an extensive Reform Bill after you had said, you would do nothing of the kind, was "such as men like Fox, or Lord GREY, or ALTHORP would have spurned; and that men like Lord LIVERPOOL, the Duke of WELLINGTON, and Sir ROBERT PEEL would not have adopted." But surely Lord RUSSELL would not consign the people to the tender mercies of a policy such as Lord LIVERPOOL and the Duke of WELLINGTON would have approved. It was a relief when the principles and policy of LIVERPOOL, and WELLINGTON were got rid of, for those statesmen were declared enemies of progress, and if their ideas had not been overcome there would have been no Free Trade and the country would have come to the revolution and ruin which Sir ROBERT PEEL's happy change averted. The authority of the last-mentioned statesman's example upon the Corn Laws might be quoted by you in vindication of your own liberalized opinion on Reform. Disinclined though I may be to approve a Tory Administration even in the modified shape it has taken under the pressure of public opinion, I am altogether averse from the resuscitation of the sentiments of those old Tory Governments when opinion was expressed under fear of military sabres and bayonets, and public meetings were declared to be only farces which the Duke of WELLINGTON could laugh at and despise. Lord RUSSELL is wrong if he supposes that the mind of the Nation could be ruled by the political doctrines of statesmen and Governments thirty years ago. The world



is changed since then. A new generation has come into active existence, with different ideas, modes, and interests from what were contemplated by Lord LIVERPOOL and Lord GREY; and as far as one can look to party questions and party divisions, it seems as if the old battle fields of party were being swept away, and the old standards of party politicians were no longer to be raised. The days of Government for the sake of party are passed away, and the country must be ruled by the majority of the people, for the interests of the people.

Britain has enjoyed representative institutions for centuries, and yet few of the mass of the British people have any clear conception of the true objects of representation, or of the importance of honest, straightforward arrangements for conducting electoral business. Any approximation towards equal electoral districts must break up existing territorial arrangements, and will consequently be vehemently opposed by numerous classes who would lose power in consequence of such a change. The progress we are making from the comparative barbarism of an aristocratic system towards the civilization of Democracy, brings individual life and character into greater prominence and importance. An exclusive system permits the few to rule according to a conventional plan, and lumps the mass of the people together as mere subjects of legislation, who have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them. A Democratic system if worthy of the name, aims at making all the citizens agents in Government and social progress. It recognizes the grand fundamental political Truth that the majority have a right to decide all practical questions; and it is evident that if all the individuals in a State were fairly represented in Parliament, the majority in the country would have a corresponding majority amongst the M.P.'s. The good old Chartist scheme was devised for equal electoral districts, with one member for each. In the new German Constitution there is approximate equality in the apportionment of members to population, and the Suffrage is almost universal among adult males. In America, the principle of assigning representation in proportion to population has always been acted upon, and Britain stands alone, in the present day, for the extent and absurdity to which the opposite principle of inequality has been carried, and for the corresponding extent to which minorities can obstruct the wishes of majorities, and place unjustifiable obstacles in the way of improvement. A strong, promptly legislating Parliament cannot be obtained now that the country has passed the despotic stage, until the opinions of majorities are fairly represented, and the conflict now going on is to decide whether the majority shall rule or whether minorities shall be permitted to circumvent the great mass of the people, as they do at this time, and as they have hitherto done, under our fraudulent electoral system. An immense deal of time is now lost through the artificial impediments placed in the way of the majority. Our House of Common men is devised and contrived *not* to represent the majority, and it only consents to do so when public excitement has grown too strong to be safely withstood. A representation that would give the majority fair play must be founded upon the principle that the whole people should be represented as justly as electoral arrangements can contrive. When that is the case, legislation will be prompt and decisive upon all questions which the Nation understands, and it will only linger where it ought to wait,—namely, in those cases in which, for want of sufficient information, the people have not been able to make



up their minds. We may be sure that a real representation of majorities can only be obtained by the fairest representation of the whole community. That plan only would put minorities in their right place, as entitled to be heard, but not to obstruct the decision to which the majority is willing to arrive. Mere crotchets would have little force, and unsettled questions would be chiefly discussed amongst the people before they came to the House of our Common men. If we wish for the political growth of our country we must frankly accept the principle that the majority ought to rule, and that any contrivances which give any sort of minorities undue power are to be condemned.

The moment that Lord DERBY's withdrawal, not merely from the head of the great Tory party, but from the head of it while in possession of power, began to be talked about, the most delicate of personal questions were unavoidably raised. "Who shall be Premier in DERBY's stead?"—became the general question for several days. Looking at politics as a mere game, or as a fierce fight between the Ins and the Outs, you, every one must acknowledge, had fully,—I had almost made the mistake of saying fairly,—earned a title to the first place, when it became vacant,—and vacant principally by your own plans. But was that title cordially allowed,—or which is the same thing, was it allowed to be paramount by those who must be united in the allowance of it, if the Tories, as a party, are to be kept together? Up to the beginning of the Session of 1867, you had to struggle against the invincible, or all but invincible, repugnance of bucolic Dukes, and the country gentlemen at large, to accept any man as their head, who, in point of title or of estate, or both, was not one of themselves. Just, probably, as you had triumphed over that formidable obstruction in the path of your ambition, you did an act so surprising—so contrary to the traditions of those to whom you lent your services, that neither yourself nor anybody else could wonder should it bring your upward career to a final pause at the point of present attainment. In what depends upon ingenuity, however,—When were you found at fault? Did you not, by the course which you pursued last Session, bring matters to such a point that you can do without your party—at least, as well as your party can do without you?

You were entitled to the first position by every Tory argument that should prevail in the choice of a First Minister of the Crown. Eloquence, knowledge, skill of fence, dexterity in debate, and readiness on all occasions, compelled the acknowledgement of your claims to the succession. It was said that a Duke was to be made Prime Minister because he was a Duke and had a grandfather, whilst you had only a lineage beginning with a father who contributed some of the pleasantest of books to the British library. Such a result would have been a scandal, and the Nation would have felt it as an insult, but now it is admitted that long services, high intellectual courage, and statesman-like habits entitled you to the place held by PITT and CANNING. The race of Commoners is not yet unproductive of Ministers, although aristocracy does start with advantages in the race. Your elevation prepares the way for a Liberal Commoner, and there can be no objection to the installation of Mr. GLADSTONE as First Minister when his day arrives,—as it will before long. The great intellectual struggle of the giants will be transferred from the dull atmosphere of the gilded Chamber of the Lords to the Lower House of the Common men,—with the difference now that the combatants will know they contend



for the grandest distinction that can be obtained by a citizen. To be Prime Minister of Britain, a man must have been proved, and have proved himself, and if he comes to the post before his competitors it is because he has endurance, temper, and capacity. To be Prime Minister a man must be great, and your elevation will tend to make men forget the littleness of cabals and the intrigues of families, in order that they may win because they have aspired to be patriots and Statesmen worthy of the name of Britain. Much as your opponents may differ from you, they must confess that you have shown yourself to be possessed of great qualities, and it would be ungenerous not to allow you to attain to the first place in Britain. How long you may hold the position is quite a question apart from fitness to hold it, for so long as the Nation recognizes the principle of party government, the first place ought to be given to intellectual excellence, and this not even your bitterest political antagonist will deny to you. The appointment is a compliment to the British people, and not a little credit is due to the great Tory families whose claims have been set aside with their own consent, in order that you the great Commoner of their party may succeed to the first post. I hope the Liberals will learn a lesson from the Tories, and cease to regard the claims of the great Revolution Families as sacred. There is at least one man, there is possibly more than one, in the ranks of the Liberals, whose claims are far above any pretension which the Great Aristocratic Families can show.

It is said that wherever there is a *will* there is a *way*; and many incidents in the biographies of eminent men would support the belief in the truth of the adage. I may allude to the words you uttered some thirty years ago in the House of Common men, when laughed down by that assembly. You observed on that occasion:—"I have attempted many things, and have often failed in the beginning; but I have never abandoned the final hope of success. I sit down now, yet the time will come when you *shall* hear me." And, again, it is known that Lord MELBOURNE, in his customary and nonchalant manner, and in a somewhat patronizing tone, inquired what were your political prospects; to which query you immediately replied,—“I mean, my lord, to be Prime Minister of Britain;” and you have kept your word. But, although you had the will to become Premier of Britain, it is very doubtful if you would ever have attained that elevated position without changing the color of your coat,—or, in other words, deserting the politics and party you embraced and belonged to on entering public life. As with you, so with Lord DERBY. Both abandoned your earlier predilections, and joined the army where promotion seemed the easier to obtain. Lord DERBY has filled a large space in the public eye for now nearly forty years. He was one of the most conspicuous of the Reformers of 1831,—and he was a member of the Cabinet that passed the Reform Acts. With his name is associated the great measure of Negro Emancipation, by which Britain sacrificed twenty millions, in order to redeem from their bondage the slaves of our colonial plantations. With the name of Lord DERBY, too, the great system of National Education in Ireland is bound up, and if on two occasions Lord DERBY felt it right to leave his political friends, he did so from motives that were never questioned, nor was there ever any attempt made to sully his political reputation even in quarters where the wisdom of his policy was doubted. You started in life as an Ultra-Liberal; and the late Premier enlisted under the Liberal standard, but with opinions less



advanced than yours. Your tactics must have completely realized the most sanguine expectations of both,—but there is this difference between you, for, although, by virtue of birth and fortune, the artificial nobleman had good grounds for believing that one day or another he might become First Minister of the Crown, you, the Commoner, had nothing whatever to depend upon but the force of indomitable resolution, backed by the dominant power of a brilliant and gigantic intellect. Then, although you had the will to become what you are, you instinctively felt that the surest way of realizing your expectations must be that of joining your fortunes with those of the Tories. For many years you were doomed to sit in the cold shade of Opposition. Fortune more frequently frowned than smiled upon you. You were the acknowledged leader of the Tory party, but many of its members chafed terribly under your yoke. The noodle Lords that could scarcely brook political inferiority to an upstart, and a man of neither wealth, nor rank, nor family, were constantly clamoring to have you thrown over. “Of what use or profit,” they asked, “is it following an unprincipled man who cannot lead us into the fat pastures of office, but keeps us perpetually on the wrong side of the doors in Downing Street?” One of the chief characteristics of the British aristocracy, as you well know, is its base and rank ingratitude to those out of its own order who serve them best. It is not, therefore, at all surprising that, although by the force of your great and commanding genius, you contrived to fish the Tory party out of the mire, weld its scattered and disorderly fragments into a solid and compact mass, and by so doing present a bold face to their antagonists, that yet in spite of all these great services, the ungrateful Tories were on the point of throwing you overboard, when, by your perspicuity and tact you were steering the once ricketty, but now thoroughly renovated, old Tory ship into the haven of office. You, who were once the slave, is now the master; and the Dukes, the Earls, the Marquises, and the pot-bellied squires that were plotting, as well as their muddy Brains would admit, to throw their leader overboard, are now, one and all your humble and obsequious followers. In other words, you have the ball at your feet, and it remains to be seen which way you will kick it. As a progressive Minister you will become popular, and may retain the reins of power for some time. As a re-actionary, or even stationary, Minister of the Palmerstonian stamp, your term of office is not worth a few months’ purchase. Let you show yourself, not the narrow-minded Minister of the Tories, but the long-sighted leader of the British people, and there is no saying how long you may preside over the destinies of the Nation. Everybody knows that a mere plebeian, untitled Premier is a bitter pill for the Court and aristocracy to swallow; and both are certain, ere long, to adopt the same tactics that hounded CANNING to death, and once nearly prevailed in keeping PEEL out of office. It is, therefore, neither upon the Court nor on the artificial nobility that you as Premier can rely for support, but on the people. So long, however, as you retain a Cabinet constituted like the present,—How is it possible to be a progressive and popular Minister? I suspect the Cabinet must be remodelled, if you as its chief will be found deserving of remaining in office. Of what earthly use are the Dukes and Earls comprising it? They are little better than obstructive dummies. Knowing this to be the case, you will be compelled to oust CHELMSFORD from the woolsack, and replace him by CAIRNS, in order to increase the debating power in



the House of the Lords. And yet there are four Dukes (BUCKINGHAM, RICHMOND, MARLBOROUGH, MONTROSE), and two Earls (DEVON and MALMESBURY) Cabinet Ministers, in the Upper House!! Of what use are they to you? If they possess ideas they cannot find language to express them, otherwise the debating power of a Government comprising so many Peers ought to be most formidable and effective in the Upper House. The stupidity of the Dukes is costly to the nation, the substitution of CAIRNS for CHELMSFORD involving an extra outlay of five thousand per annum, the latter being entitled when out of office to his retiring pension of that amount, which he did not pocket whilst receiving the full pay of a Lord Chancellor,—namely, ten thousand per annum. If you can keep yourself afloat with such dead weight round your neck as the dummy Dukes and Earls in your Cabinet, you will prove yourself the most wonderful politician of this or any other age. They will either trip you up by their treachery, or smother you by their stupidity.

The policy of your forthcoming Administration will greatly depend upon yourself and the rank-and-file of the Tory party. If you can establish a good smooth understanding with your followers, you will not, of course, care very much for your colleagues. You will, no doubt, ask the Tory squires to make sacrifices, and all the sacrifices to which you can prevail upon them to consent you will be willing and eager to accomplish. You will endeavor to make good your claim for the Tories to be regarded as quite as Liberal as your opponents. You will, therefore, whenever the prejudices of your followers do not decisively intervene, endeavor to outbid Mr. GLADSTONE and the Liberal party. It is stated by the Tory organs and by those who pretend to enjoy a large measure of your confidence, that your very first concession to Ireland will be the offer of a Charter to the Catholic University. This will be in redemption of the promise you made last year to The O'DONOGHUE. You assured the Irish Roman Catholic members that the Supplemental Charter was a great blunder, and that you would do far more for them than Mr. GLADSTONE and Mr. FORTESCUE were prepared to do. It will be seen, by the manner in which the Tories will receive this proposal if it should be made, how far their prejudices on other questions are likely to stand in the way of your expected policy. As soon as you can get the Cabinet completed, you will, of course, have to convene a meeting of your party at your official residence. When this occurs, you will there and then have to explain your forthcoming policy to your followers, before declaring it in the House of the Common men. You must, indeed, consult your followers, or pretend to consult them, and feign to show some deference to their opinions, if you cherish any design of using them as instruments for the accomplishment of any one of your purposes. You cannot now put Lord DERBY forward as the designer of your plans and plots, and speak through the lips of that brilliant *Automaton*. That you may command and conquer, you will have to defer and obey. Some of the Tory members, anxious for the perpetuation of the Irish State Church, like your colleagues, Sir JOHN PAKINGTON and Mr. G. HARDY, will be ready on such a testing question, to show you, that you are expected as Prime Minister, to be their servant and not their master. The problem will be, how you are to govern the Nation under such conditions. When Lord DERBY formed his late Administration, it was not regarded as particularly strong. But your new Government when it shall be



organized without Lord DERBY, General PEEL, Lord CARNARVON, and Lord CRANBORNE cannot but be regarded as the weakest that has held the reins of office for generations. You are,—though now Prime Minister,—still thoroughly disliked and distrusted by the breath-blown nobles with high blue blood, and your colleagues, with about two exceptions, are neither eminent for ability nor for the weight of personal character,—a quality which you do not even yourself possess. There is no time, or room now, for the dissimulation and folly which would stoop to unworthy agencies,—for the pretences which are untrue in their pretexts,—for the artifices which, born of conceit, perish in their weakly birth, or for the trickeries which, deemed by shallow minds essential to success, only expedite the inevitable ruin which they are intended to avert.

The time has arrived when the people must have some clear distinct public good to contend for; some banners with noble mottoes; and leaders who will set before them something worthy to do. You must be tempted or compelled to offer Liberal boons: you cannot stand still; you will either offer some half measure of Justice, and then the Liberal leaders must press it out with the full measure, heaped up and running over; or you will again astonish the Nation by outbidding even the anticipations of the Liberals, and outstripping them, while panting Whigs toil after you in vain. You know, as well as I do, that you hold office on the tenure of satisfying the acknowledged requirements of the day; and though it is true, that, to accomplish that end, you must perpetually violate the antecedents of your party, the condition is absolute and relentless. While, then, you thus persevere with Liberal measures, you will continue to prolong the march of Liberal success. Should you, however, cease,—should your ordinary supporters arrest your progress, you must at once break down, and the Liberal side, relieved of the obstacle that stands before it, will take the work into its own hands, and resume the advance from a new point of departure. Meanwhile the members of the Liberal party will best prepare for that inevitable opportunity, by keeping a steadfast watch on the conduct of their opponents; exercising a studied self-control over their own natural impatience, and thus drilling their strength to sustain the action of their trusted leaders, the very instant that the hour for action strikes. Of course, the Liberal party out of office has a right to fulfill its functions of Grand Political Inquisitor; it has a right to put you to the question by a perpetual succession of direct interrogatories,—a right to know whether your intentions are honorable,—whether you mean flirtation with Liberal opinions or marriage, for better for worse. The Liberals may give you time to prepare measures, but you have had plenty of time since the 13th current to decide as to the principles of your policy. On the subject of the Irish State Church, the public is anxious to know whether you will try to uphold the present settlement intact,—or will attempt the equivalent endowment of all sects,—or will assent to impartial disendowment of all;—or whether you have any fourth alternative of your own to accomplish the great enterprise of the day,—the pacification of Ireland. We live in an enlightened age, when the eyes of the world are open to all wrongs, and the public conscience is alive to all evils. We have the sterling sense of honor which civilization begets to assist us; we have the public shame, with which no nation conscious of dignity can dispense, to support us; we have, above all, the popular instinct of justice, and the irresistible force of popular



sympathy to sustain us; and with these as aids, all that is required is union and co-operation, and that harmony of action which gives effect to identity of feeling and sentiment. The wrongs of Ireland are now patent; the disaffection of the Irish people is beyond contradiction. We have arrived at the crisis when statesmen must act, or Government must fail; and when the true friends of the country must take their stand, and ensure the remedies which are as necessary to the security of Britain as to the welfare of Ireland. This work, however, cannot be pursued, except upon one principle, and that is equality, social and theological, amongst all classes. There can be no real freedom where there is the semblance of sectarian domination; there can be no real independence where there is even the tolerated theory of ascendancy. The Catholic must be as free, as independent, as privileged, as the Protestant. He must have the same rights, the same prerogatives, the same social and civil honors, as the classes to which the State has heretofore accorded undue and undeserved favors; and over the whole land the equal breath of liberty must pass, vivifying and fertilizing all it touches, and imparting fresh vigor and bloom to the drooping plants that have so long waited for its advent.

Again, though the Nation can afford to wait for clauses of a Tenant Right Act, Reformers should like to know at once whether a tenant is to have a right in the improvements executed by himself. But, though it is the first duty of the Opposition to obtain information on these points, it is not the whole duty of man. I hold that the leaders of the Opposition must be equally frank in laying down the broad lines of a Liberal policy towards Ireland. The time is past for saying to Ireland, "Open your mouth, and shut your eyes, and see what a new Ministry will send you." Reformers want to know from their own leaders, also, the general outlines of their creed. Of course, Reformers are well aware that it cannot be any upholding of the present ecclesiastical settlement of Ireland; but,—Is it to be some tentative scheme, or something broad and substantial? For my own part, I declare, that, as regards the Irish Church, my policy simply is ecclesiastical equality for all. The Liberal party does not deserve to seize or retain power unless it makes perfect equality of all Irish Churches and Sects a Cabinet question by which to stand or fall. That equality can be carried out in more than one way. It might be attained by granting equal facilities for the equivalent endowment of all Sects, and the equality of all in the eye of the law, or by the impartial disendowment and disestablishment of all. It is a question for statesmen to consider which is the better policy, and it is also their business to ascertain the wishes of the Irish people, and the form in which they would desire to see the principle of equality embodied. The Liberals must now advance on the position, and enforce equality, either by levelling up or by levelling down. If English, Scottish, and Irish Tories are so mad and blind as to persist in refusing their assent to equality, their refusal will simply sweep them from the scene, reduce them to the functions of a bigoted opposition, and leave the Liberals—free from any just imputation of faction—to execute the grave and imperative duty of the hour in their own way. If the work is not done, the declaration of a fixed resolve to do it by the Liberal leaders will stir up men's minds like the sound of a mighty trumpet, and give us all something to fight for, and, at the same time, something worthy of a fight.

Although the Tory party is sure to split into sections,—some in-



clining to mild Liberalism, and others to decided resistance and re-action,—and though it may be very difficult to foresee the comparative strength of the various divisions, there are, at the present time, measures before Parliament, and propositions which must soon be discussed therein, against which the Tories will do all in their power to defeat the desires of the great mass of the British people. It is very improbable that the Tories will satisfy public demand concerning the Irish State Church, and certain that they will vehemently resist plans like those of MILL and BRIGHT for originating a free yeomanry proprietary on Irish soil. Not only the Tories, but the sham Liberals amongst the richer portion of the middle class, dislike the idea of changes of this description. Upon the Education question public opinion is, no doubt, progressing very fast, but a recent meeting of the body calling itself the “Central Chamber of Agriculture” affords illustration of the difficulties which will be thrown in the way of educating the rural population. The town population, hitherto excluded from the Franchise, will be largely admitted by the new Reform Bill, and it is universally felt that to withhold education and bestow the Suffrage would be a suicidal proceeding. Not so in the rural districts. The agricultural laborer is still to be excluded from political rights, the tenant-farmer is still to be a modified vassal or retainer of the local Soil-Lord, and education would be a disturbing influence in such a system. Administrative Reform, as a substitute for Political Reform, was a foolish dream a few years since. The one could not be attained except through the other; and,—Does anyone believe that the Tory party will consent to great administrative improvements, involving a complete revolution in the army, navy, and diplomatic services, except under actual compulsion, too strong to resist? The Nation expects to be a great gainer by the Reform Bill, and will soon demand another if the present one should be so manipulated as to prove inefficient. The Reform Bill of 1832 was the precursor of an important series of measures which the old Parliament would not have passed. In like manner, the new Parliament, whose advent is approaching, will be expected to originate a large and handsome series of Organic Reforms. There is a delusion running through the upper circles that no organic changes will be permitted,—that we shall have so many more voters on the register, and pretty much the same class of men in the House of the Common men. It may prove true that the House of the Common men will not be so extensively affected by the introduction of any large number of men differing from the old obstructive sort, but the temper and spirit of the body may be much improved by the accession to its ranks of a few more able Liberals, supported by public opinion. On every subject of importance for the future well-being of the Nation a great battle has to be fought between old parties and new. You are not a genuine Tory nor a true Liberal in disguise; but whatever difficulties you may have with your party, and whatever concessions you may have had to make to their folly or to their selfish interests, you will, no doubt, try to teach them a few more lessons of concession as soon as the Liberals are in a position to show that they have the power to enforce them. The House of the Common men contains a dreadful lot of *dummies* amongst its pretended Liberals,—men who may often vote right, but who have no influence until questions come to a division. The Liberal cause cannot be properly served by such men. We want representatives who can assist in producing a Liberal tone of thought wherever



they go. The Tories have no difficulty in getting orthodox and conventionally correct obstructives, but such people cannot discuss any subject with a show of logical intelligence. They can look as wise as owls when silent, but speech betrays their folly. The Liberals must strengthen their already preponderant debating power, and then Toryism must succumb.

I am, dear Sir, yours respectfully, and an humble but zealous literary laborer in the *Cause* which has a deep and abiding interest even for those who affect to despise it.

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER VI.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
March 7th, 1868.

The Right Hon. B. DISRAELI, Prime  
Minister of Britain.

DEAR SIR,—You have made your first appearance in your new character in the House of the Common men on Thursday evening, the 5th current, amidst the cheers of those whom you have “Educated.” Your speech was brief, but its brevity was not that which is said to be the soul of wit. It merely expressed that your hobby was to be the same as Lord DERBY’S, except on Irish affairs. On that branch your explanation is postponed to Tuesday next. And you concluded your short speech by saying:—“I will not now go into details, which might be misapprehended; but we shall have, in a short time, an occasion to state our general policy and views with respect to Ireland, which we shall be prepared to recommend and to carry out. The delay which has taken place although unavoidable, is to be regretted; but the House may rely upon it, that there shall be no lack of energy or good-will on the part of the Government to make up for that delay in the public business, and we feel sure that we may rely on the cordial co-operation of the House.” The *Times* has of late thought to do you a service by dwelling on your claims, as a man of letters, to the support of the literary fraternity. It has, however, brought down upon the well-intentioned *Times* the rebuke of one of the Ministerial organs, the *Standard*, which thinks, it sees sneers and sarcasms where the *Times* appears only to have meant to be complimentary. As the leading journal has certainly been friendly to you as the new Prime Minister, it was, at least, entitled to the benefit of a doubt. It seems, however, that, with the Carlton Club, the avowedly Ministerial journals, and with no inconsiderable section of the Tory party, the less said about your authorship the better. They have adopted the idea that allusions to your books, and especially to such novels as “Vivian Grey” and “Coningsby,” are “low.” HORACE WALPOLE, it is well known, did not care to be considered a man of letters, and rebuked his friend, Sir HORACE MANN, for following the style of the magazines which occasionally referred to him as the “learned gentleman.” The Tories, it seems, have the same feeling about you. They wish you to be regarded as a statesman to whom literature has been a graceful ornament, entitling you, indeed, to support from “the gentlemen of



the Press," but not justifying even friendly literary critics in openly speculating about what may be the feelings of the author of "Vivian Grey" and "Coningsby" on attaining the position of which he has long dreamed, and which he told Lord MELBOURNE, before he had succeeded in being returned to the House of the Common men, that he intended one day to fill. The *Standard*, with the stately mansion at Grosvenor Gate, and the light brown liveries and powdered hair of the footmen full in view, asks,—“Why should a man of letters be expected to carry into politics the devices and the resources of his profession? What can be a more vulgar curiosity than that which carries the shop into political life? But the Tory journal forgets that literature and politics combined have been your shop, and that they have by you never been separated. When you were Chancellor of the Exchequer for the first time you said, “I am myself a gentleman of the Press, and have no other escutcheon.” If you were to be dissociated from literature, you would have to be dissociated from yourself; for most even of your novels, and all of them which have obtained any real popularity, have been political manifestos as much as literary productions. “Coningsby” is, for instance, the best known of your novels. Have you, however, regarded it as purely a work of literary art, to be judged independently of any political or official conduct? The *Standard* is apparently unacquainted with your works. “The main purpose of ‘Coningsby,’ you write yourself, after you had become one of the leaders of the Tory party, “was to vindicate the just claims of the Tory party to be the popular political confederation of the country: a purpose which the author had more or less pursued from a very early period of life.” You afterwards remarked that you only took fiction as an instrument to scatter your suggestions, and “as the method which in the temper of the times offered the best chance of influencing public opinion.” You were, therefore, laying the foundations of your Premiership when writing “Coningsby.” You would be yourself one of the first to disclaim the pretension that between your literary works and your political acts there is an essential and diametrical difference. Even the characters in “Coningsby” were not considered purely imaginary. They were represented as photographs from real life, the author plainly saying that “he had ventured to treat of events and characters of which he had some personal experience, not altogether without the impartiality of the future.” As a novelist, therefore, you were a politician, using that particular form of composition as a machine for the wider dissemination of your ideas. Some of the opinions you deliberately expressed in your novels, as well as in your other compositions, especially on Ireland and the Established Church, may be extremely inconvenient to the Tories; but they cannot be ignored. They are on record: they expressed more than sentimental outpourings of the mind: they were the judgments of a matured politician on the facts before him; and they will be found to correspond with similar enunciations in your speeches and most serious prose compositions.

The fact that you have written novels, political pamphlets, and biographies, before attaining the first post in the political world, ought not, however, to blind the judgment of literary men as to the real significance of your political career. It was not to your authorship that you first owed the leadership of the Tory party: nor is it to your authorship that you owe your appointment of Prime Minister. You won the affection and sympathy of the country gentlemen in 1846, by



personally assailing Sir ROBERT PEEL for becoming a Free-trader, and by becoming yourself a Protectionist, after having boasted two years before, that you were a Free-trader; that you had gone down to your constituents at Shrewsbury, and made them all Free-traders; that Mr. Pitt was a Free-trader; and that Free-trade was one of the recognized principles of the Tory party. You won your position as Prime Minister by carrying a household suffrage Reform Bill in 1867, after opposing a moderate Reform Bill in 1866, and after refusing to reduce the Borough Franchise at all in 1859. You have politically done many things which will always be regarded as not creditable; and I submit that literary men ought to judge the literary man who has attained the Premiership, by the same canons of criticism which they apply to wealthy commoners and noble lords who have filled that distinguished position. It would be to degrade, and not to elevate, the literary profession, if writers were to look over, or lightly to blame in you, because you are one of themselves, what they would severely reprehend in a Sir ROBERT PEEL, a Lord MELBOURNE, or a Lord PALMERSTON. You showed no consideration to Sir ROBERT PEEL, even when that Statesman, under the pressure of the Irish famine, was repealing the Corn Laws at a great personal sacrifice. Why should you, because you are a literary man, expect that forbearance and indulgence which you never evinced to other men when they have stood in the way of your ambition? Britain has had in Parliament, and in high positions in the Cabinet, authors whose literary abilities have been far superior to yours, and whose careers have been far less tortuous. ADDISON, BURKE, and MACAULAY have written books, to which nothing that has come from your pen will bear a moment's comparison. They were all three in the House of the Common men, and in the first ranks of their party. ADDISON was a Secretary of State at a comparatively early period. BURKE was, for a generation, one of the leaders of the Whigs, their great "Educator," and one of the most eminent political philosophers that has ever sat in the House of the Common men. Mr. MACAULAY's political life began not very much earlier than yours; but he entered the House of the Common men, and attained a great position much sooner, sat in Cabinets, and at the time when, much to the regret of his friends, he retired from public life, they would have given him any place he cared to fill. It is strange that you are the only literary man for whom, as a politician, indulgence has been requested, from the mere fact of your being a man of letters. It was said, when such appeals were made for you, at the time you first became Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the maxim, "Honor among thieves," could never be very honorable for the "gentlemen of the Press" to adopt when criticizing the actions of one of their band. The same reply may be given to your literary apologists at this time, on the ground that you are a man of letters. The *Times* is not justified in putting forward this plea for exceptional indulgence; neither is the *Standard* justifiable in disregarding your authorship in considering your political conduct. If you now contradict the tenor of your life, and act patriotically, disinterestedly, and nobly, so much the better for yourself and for the credit of the literary profession. But if you act as you have done on so many other occasions, disregarding the ordinary laws of the political game, as well as the ordinary ideas of political morality, it will be the duty of the "gentlemen of the Press" to blame as strongly such unscrupulousness on the part of the literary Prime Minister, as they would do if the First



Lord of the Treasury—whose conduct deserved censure—were a large-acred squire, a wealthy merchant, or an Earl, Marquis, or Duke of the purest blue blood. The *Times* says your triumph, when you entered the House of the Common men as First Lord of the Treasury, amid sympathetic cheers from all sides, was complete. That you may never attain a greater exaltation. That the nation will not grudge you the glory of that hour. The right to take place must, however, be distinguished from the right to keep it. What had you to offer as the programme of your Cabinet? You proceeded to declare that the new Government inherited the opinions and principles of Lord DERBY's Ministry. It is a disappointment to find it formally announced that the opening of the second seal is to reveal no more than that of the first. As to the domestic policy of the Ministry, you had a surprise for your friends. You declared that the Administration would pursue a liberal policy. The Opposition cheered, and those on the Government benches who were not too much astonished stared with great eyes, and laughed with alien lips. There is a possibility that, in studying the House of Common men you have paid too little attention to the Nation outside it, which has to be governed. It is necessary to be more than a master of Parliamentary management. Government, according to the exigencies of the situation, does not stir an enlightened mass; they require enunciation of principles and an unequivocal declaration of policy. It remains to be seen whether you will rise to the emergency. You are undoubtedly in a position of great difficulty, and you cannot be harshly judged if you prefer to shape your course as apparent necessities suggest; but, if you would do something more than secure the mere passing support of a moribund Parliament, you must have greater things to propose for national consideration and approval than you announced on last Thursday night.

Nature was stronger than Art last Thursday with you; as the new Premier you did your singular and unparalleled personal triumph the justice of being so impressed by it, as to be obviously unnerved. Oratorically, your maiden or first speech as Prime Minister of Britain was not a good specimen of your powers; it hung fire, was awkward in phrase, and produced no effect apart from the speaker. Strange as it may seem, and notwithstanding your being a practised tactician and an easy victor in so many fights, you were positively nervous as you laid your hand on the garland, and heard your own voice salute you "Imperator." Such a phenomenon could not have happened if you had not a quick imagination as well as a cold and quiet will; but the British public will regard it as more to your credit than any set and well delivered speech, cumbrous with careful ornaments, and fluent with studied impromptus. It was quite evident on last Thursday night, that the man whom the House of the Common men once refused to hear was at last thoroughly realizing his revenge as you rose to announce yourself the head of the British Cabinet. After you had thought, and talked, about the supreme historical height so often that the sonorous Parliamentary phrases in which you spoke of it, and even the whisper of your own ambition, had lost a little of their meaning, the actual accomplished fact had for you a seriousness, a solemnity which you could not resist. You were cheered as you arrived at the House, and as you entered it,—if not vociferously, at least enough to touch you; and nobody better than yourself could describe if you were now writing a fiction, the sentiments which would crowd upon a politician in your position.



Probably for the first time in your varied life you were conscious of events which outstrip even fiction; and your manner certainly conveyed the impression of a deep emotion more eloquently than your words. The House appeared to understand, by its respectful attention and quick cheers, something more than you, with all your skill, managed to utter. You did not speak glibly, like a winner who had gained the prize and already undervalued it, but like one who bore it proudly and with emotion, as well worth, even for its own sake, the long efforts of a life. Certainly, in your usual moods, you, who were once "a gentleman of the Press," would not have provoked a laugh, and then a louder one, by promising the Nation "a Liberal," a "truly Liberal" policy, which you hastened to explain as the old original Tory policy of "tradition." Nor would you, in your less natural moments, have proffered yourself so humbly as the political legatee of Lord DERBY's opinions—right and wrong, popular and unpopular. The whole speech was characterized by a strange modesty, and by a curious unskillfulness, graceful in the mouth of one to whose self-reliance and tact thirty patient years bear witness. You seldom or never succeeded more than when you hesitated whilst announcing yourself the established successor of CHATHAM, CANNING, PEEL, and DERBY.

The large assemblage of members and strangers which awaited your first appearance, as Prime Minister, in the House of the Common men was probably much disappointed by the peculiarly concise and formal character of your speech; but your eulogy on Lord DERBY, and your general profession of good intentions, were more appropriate, in your own estimation, to the occasion than any elaborate exposition of policy. You always endeavor to impress your hearers with your good designs, and to prevent future events from casting their shadows before them: you are largely developed in SECRETIVENESS; and you are an adept in the Art of "*make-believe*." You have had abundant opportunities of appreciating the qualities and great condescensions of your august predecessor, and it must be supposed that you must have some ground, as well as some deep design, for the almost startling statement that Lord DERBY was always the most hard-working member of his Cabinet, while he appeared to outside spectators only a brilliant and desultory amateur. Whatever may have been your deep design for plastering your patron, you were certainly mistaken,—to give it the mildest possible name,—when you expressed the opinion that no greater master in the arrangement of details ever existed, for among Lord DERBY's cotemporaries, Sir ROBERT PEEL and Mr. GLADSTONE were indisputably his superiors in the knowledge of all the intricacies of administration and finance. In Parliament, however, as in the pulpits of certain Sects, it is the business of each successor to expatiate on the supposed or real merits of the former occupant of his chair. No one has a greater command than yourself of ornate rhetoric, and a little generous exaggeration,—well buttered up for the occasion,—was not at all likely to jar very harshly on the feelings of your party, or on the ears of many of the audience assembled in the House of the Common men. It was not your intention to afford them the additional indulgence of gratified curiosity. As you very gravely admitted, it was natural that the House of the Common men should receive some intimation of the principles of the new Administration; and you, accordingly, proceeded to state that the Government would pursue abroad a policy of peace without isolation, and that in domestic affairs it would be at the same



time truly Liberal and instinctively Tory. It was interesting to ascertain that you, like your Irish Secretary, deeply regretted the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus in Ireland, and that you hoped that disaffection was gradually disappearing. The House of the Common men was exhorted by you to proceed with circumspection, and with an anxious desire to conciliate the opinions of all parties in framing measures which will advance the prosperity and happiness of the Irish people,—and thus the time had arrived when the House became bound to hear you. There may, probably, be some practical difficulty in conciliating, for the same measures, the support of parties which aim at entirely incompatible objects; but there can be no doubt that it is desirable, if it is possible, to legislate for the benefit of Ireland. It is equally undeniable that Liberal and Tory tendencies are valuable in their proper place; and a policy of peace has become the most accepted of British principles or necessities. There was probably no particular use in your short address on last Thursday night; but there are times when it is decorous to speak, and inconvenient to give information. Truisms are, on the whole, less objectionable than paradoxes, and they afford no handle for debate.

You certainly endeavored to prove to the satisfaction of your Tory followers, on your first appearance in the House, as Prime Minister of Britain, that Lord DERBY exercised a sound judgment in recommending the Queen to entrust to you the task of forming and leading the Ministry; and that the most powerful member of the Cabinet, mentally considered, ought always, if possible, to be also its nominal head; and that, even if you had been disposed to waive your undoubted claims to the post of Premier, you must have retained the lead of the House of the Common men, and the control of the general policy of the British Government. It is not at present the interest of any political party, I think, to weaken a Ministry which must almost necessarily remain in office until after the first general election; and it is evidently advantageous to the Nation at large that the Government should be so organized and so managed as to possess the highest attainable efficiency. The rank and patronage which are still, however unjustly, annexed to the First Office in the State add considerably to the influence even of the ablest leader of the House of the Common men. Although there can be no doubt that Lord RUSSELL gave a kind of steady and loyal support to his superior colleague, there are still veteran politicians of extensive Parliamentary experience who freely assert that Mr. GLADSTONE would have evidently carried his Reform Bill if he had been First Lord of the Treasury. You are well aware that, any competitor who had been preferred to you, must either have been a Peer of secondary political rank, or the most considerable of your colleagues in the Lower House; and that the appointment of a nominal Prime Minister would only have been a public announcement that the Tory party felt no confidence in its real leader; and that you could not be expected to submit to the would-be independent and vigorous supremacy of Lord STANLEY. In the House of the Common men, the arrangement which has been made will be even more popular than in the general community; for you have, by long experience and natural aptitude, become one of the most successful of Parliamentary leaders. Sir ROBERT PEEL, Lord PALMERSTON, and Mr. GLADSTONE derived a considerable portion of their power over the House of the Common men from their general reputation and influence throughout the Nation; but you have risen to poli-



tical eminence almost exclusively within the walls of Parliament. Your more eloquent rival, Mr. GLADSTONE, has often been baffled by your superiority in tact and temper, and you have almost uniformly avoided unnecessary collision with personal susceptibility. Your extensive knowledge of human nature taught you that the copious invectives and cutting sarcasms which first made you conspicuous in the House of the Common men were not the means by which a high position could be permanently retained. In the ordinary conduct of Parliamentary business, no leader of party is more courteous, or more habitually exempt from the weakness of irritability. Your opponents, and many of your admirers, complain that you have no deep convictions; but there are many qualities,—as you know well by long experience,—which the House of the Common men prefers to real anxious and painful earnestness. The conduct of the Reform Bill of last year through the House of the Common men, was proved, by many just and legitimate criticisms on its peculiar morality and policy, to have been a marvel of dexterous management. Parliamentary skill is not, however, one of the most exalted of human gifts, but yet it is extremely useful to a Minister. Early experience will show whether you will succeed in reigning over the Tory party which you have long governed. Your high-born, blue-blooded, and wealthy followers have always affected a special devotion to Lord DERBY, as an excuse for rendering substantial allegiance to a less congenial chief. In private they have often depreciated you as their leader, or even denounced you as an adventurer; and, from time to time, little clusters of malcontents have whispered to each other imaginary intrigues for deposing you in favor of a more genuine Tory. You,—the object of their jealousy,—have wisely remained deaf and blind to indications of dislike, declining to listen to the gossip of the guard-room as long as there was no appearance of mutiny in the ranks. Time and habit have confirmed the discipline of the Tory party, and its more sagacious members are well aware that they must choose between you, their present leader, and utter political defeat. The most dangerous crisis in your recent career was the secession of Lord CRANBORNE, with two of his colleagues, from the Cabinet, and probably you might then have failed to keep the party together, if you had not been identified in policy and fortune with Lord DERBY; but, a peril passed over is often an additional security, and the party which adhered to the Reform Bill through all its numerous metamorphoses is pledged against any unseasonable squeamishness of scruples. Yet it is undoubtedly true, that you, as Premier, will be followed by many unwilling supporters. In Lord DERBY you possessed a QUEEN-BEE, which enabled you vicariously to command the attachment of the HIVE; and in your own person you must now discover some other method of appealing to the instinct of obedience; but the bark of discontented Tories has always been worse than their bite, and you may re-assure yourself by remembering, that, thirty years ago, the more restless members of the Tory party were always murmuring against the growing Liberalism of Sir ROBERT PEEL. As the Tory party declined to follow Lord CRANBORNE on his retirement, it has no available candidate to set up against you, except Lord STANLEY, who is deeply suspected of political heterodoxy,—as the result of carefully studying some of the rudiments of Political Science.

With the exception of the sycophantic and *Tory Idea-Maker*, Lord CAIRNS, you have been unable to procure any addition of strength to



your Government. If the seceders of last year are omitted from the calculation, the present occupants of office exhaust the capacity of the party, and even encroach on the wider field of its administrative incompetence. Mr. HUNT has not yet attained the Parliamentary position which has hitherto been ordinarily supposed to be indispensable to a Chancellor of the Exchequer. A ready and industrious manipulation of figures, and a useful assistant to a Minister, he has sometimes treated grave and serious business questions with ill-judged levity; and it is very questionable whether he has mastered the higher principles of finance. The appointment of Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE, who is the pupil and financial follower of Mr. GLADSTONE, would have commanded greater confidence, but there was no candidate ready for the India Office, except probably the ubiquitous Sir JOHN PAKINGTON. If the rumor that Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE aspires to the Viceroyalty of India is well founded, he may, probably, have been unwilling to resign the Secretaryship of State, in which he is gaining experience, to support his claim. In the gilded House of the Lords, you must rely, almost exclusively, on Lord CAIRNS to defend the policy of the Government, whatever it may be, on important occasions; but it will be necessary for you to appoint another Ministerial representative, as the CHANCELLOR cannot properly conduct the ordinary business of the House of the Hereditary Law-makers of Britain. Of the respectable Peers who belong to the Cabinet, the Duke of RICHMOND alone possesses even the most elementary qualifications of a Parliamentary leader. The Duke of BUCKINGHAM would be more unpopular,—and, of course, the Duke of MARLBOROUGH is out of the question; while Lord MALMESBURY,—who, by the favor of Lord DERBY, has hitherto been occasionally employed as his Lieutenant,—is more than ordinarily deficient in the faculty of speech, and in Parliamentary tact and judgment. It is impossible that you can, even if Lord MALMESBURY continues to retain the Privy Seal, use as the mouthpiece of the Government an artificial nobleman, who, having to announce the change of Ministry, perpetrated two or three awkward blunders in as many sentences. Lord MALMESBURY might have easily remembered that he had not served, as he stated, long under Lord DERBY in office, because Lord DERBY has only been Prime Minister for the collective term of three or four years. It was a graver mistake to announce that you, who were practically chief of an almost unchanged Cabinet, was at the moment “trying to form a Government, if possible.” Lord MALMESBURY probably does injustice to himself in Parliament; but his management of the Reform Bill, during Lord DERBY’s illness in the course of last Summer, alone proves his incompetence to act as Leader in the House of the Lords. The Duke of RICHMOND is not known to have paid serious attention to politics, but he is a steady, courteous, and accurate man of business, who may be trusted to comprehend any matter which may require his attention. Whenever there is any appearance of a political battle to stem the tide of progress, and throw dust into the Nation’s eyes, of course, Lord CAIRNS must take command of the Ministerial forces. Criticism on the composition of the Government would be more interesting, if its tenure of office were not at the same time provisionally certain and prospectively insecure. Only unforeseen circumstances can cause a change of Ministry in the present year, and it is improbable that the Government will survive the first Session of the Reformed Parliament. Independently of all special subjects of controversy, the constituencies will



almost certainly return a Liberal majority, and there will be no difficulty in finding a sufficient ground for ejecting the Tory Government. As the political prospects must be as clear to you as to external observers, it may be safely conjectured that you will make an effort to illustrate the term of your respite by some striking legislative achievement. You have not succeeded in convincing the mass of the people forming the Nation that you are the champion of Reform ; but it is barely possible that you may solve some of the disputed problems of Education, or even that you may pass some useful Irish measure. You have been uniformly consistent in a prudent respect for the feelings of Roman Catholics ; and, if you abstain from offering them some plausible concession, you will certainly not have been embarrassed by any prejudice of your own. The fate of the Scotch Reform Bill, or of its principal enactments, is still doubtful ; but the probabilities are likely in favor of the measure, and of its Irish supplement. The greatest difficulty which will occur consists in the desire of the progressive party to postpone all important measures until the meeting of the future Parliament. The supporters of the Government cannot cordially desire change for its own sake, and they will not probably understand the expediency of burning the prairie before them, in time to deprive the following conflagration of fuel. You have to move a tenacious mass by the aid of reluctant workmen, and you will probably have to console yourself for political failure by the reflection, that, in spite of numerous obstacles, you have realized your highest dreams of personal ambition. A faint sympathy, resembling the interest which attends the hero of a Novel, is naturally aroused, when a daring and patient climber has reached the summit level. It remains to be seen whether the barren honor of the performance is to be its sole reward, or whether a difficult pass will be traversed into fertile valleys beyond. It may be confidently assumed, I think, that you hope to do something more than to return with the mere satisfaction of having accomplished the ascent.

“ Mr. DISRAELI succeeding Lord DERBY as Premier, and Lord DERBY resigning in favor of Mr. DISRAELI,” says an inspired critic through the Press, “ is an event which will necessarily form one of the most important and curious political episodes of the present age. The position occupied by the present First Lord of the Treasury is in itself, as well as in its surroundings, pregnant with contrasts which are calculated to puzzle as well as interest, every reflecting mind. Although belonging ostensibly to the same Tory party, and holding apparently the same kind of views ; although struggling for the same questionable cause, and striving at the same end, no two men could be more dissimilar in natural character or acquired qualifications than those who, working together, have reached in succession the same goal. Lord DERBY had rank and station to make his claim to the leadership of his party a matter not only of recognition, but of pride. Descended from a house famed in the annals of English history, bearing a name at which Royalty itself might not blush, he came as by presumptive right to that foremost place which his commanding talents entitled him to occupy and adorn. His successor had no such advantage. Sprung from an humble and alien stock, with prejudice against his race and creed, and hostility to his pretensions and efforts, he succeeded by the sheer dint of talent and perseverance ; and mounting gradually and patiently over all obstacles, attained the position which enabled him to receive, with becoming dignity, the mantle which his leader wore. But it is



not in these social relations alone that the contrast between the two Premiers mainly consists. It becomes more glaring and more striking, as well as more inscrutable, when we examine their policy and tactics. Although Tory by profession, their views and purposes were almost diametrically opposed. Lord DERBY was always receding from Liberalism: Mr. DISRAELI was always making coy and secret advances towards it. Lord DERBY was always stopping short at half measures. Mr. DISRAELI was always indirectly struggling for whole ones, and dragging his party, by the force of his genius, into the same tendency. When,—to take one or two notable instances,—Lord DERBY proposed a Tenant Right Bill in 1845, it was, probably, the most comprehensive and Liberal one ever introduced into Parliament, with the exception of SHARMAN CRAWFORD's and the late Judge SHEE's: that Bill was extinguished in the House of the Lords, and, as the judgment of his peers reversed his convictions, Lord DERBY at once abandoned the stand he had taken on the Land question, and never afterwards, whether in office or out of it, countenanced anything like an adequate settlement of it. He pursued a similar course with regard to Free Trade,—advocating one day its principles, and then suddenly bringing himself to oppose them in the ranks of the Protectionists. His dealing with the Church Establishment in Ireland was characterized by the same vacillation and inconsistency. In 1832, he laid the axe to the tree, but he timidly refrained from applying it to the root. Some rotten branches were lopped off, but the trunk remained intact, and the work of Reform incomplete. In 1859, when the extension of the Franchise came to the surface, and could not be repressed, Lord DERBY 'meddled with and muddled it,' and went out of office without ever approaching a settlement of it. It was only when Mr. DISRAELI became really the master of the Tory party—when, after experiencing the bitterness and humiliation incidental to the cold shade of prolonged Opposition, the rank-and-file of the Tories yielded blind obedience to the one man who kept them together, and sustained their hopes, that Lord DERBY belied, by one bold and vigorous step, all the principles of his previous career. In his Reform plunge he outstripped Democrat and Demagogue; and, from the high pinnacle of Tory sternness and obstinacy, suddenly descended to the broad and revolutionary platform of Household Suffrage. It was the last act of his political life. It must have caused him many a pang and many a regret to perform it. It will be for those who are interested in his fame to reconcile it with his principles; but it is easy to discover the influence which prevailed in effecting the wonderful and unexpected change. Mr. DISRAELI's teaching prevailed. His wily intellect had done its work; his ingenuity had triumphed. Through what honeyed draughts he administered his powerful medicine must remain a secret: but that it has wrought its effects, and produced the desired results, may be seen in the astonishing events of the day. And now the practical question arises—a question which most deeply concerns the people of Ireland, and which transcends in importance abstract considerations and party squabbles—it is this:—Will Mr. DISRAELI be able to lead his party as he has led them on to Reform?—will he be able to carry them on to greater undertakings and nobler triumphs? Ireland has long been waiting for the hour which seems at hand. For years she has been sitting patiently and humbly at the doors of Parliament for relief. Her voice of complaint and of sorrow has never been hushed, and only varied by the stern cry of dissatisfac-



tion and disappointment. Her demands can no longer be ignored: they must be dealt with boldly, or as boldly repudiated. There is no other course open to the statesman, or possible to Government. Has Lord DERBY, conscious of this, and unwilling to involve himself in further inconsistencies, laid down the wand of office, and allowed another less burthened with scruples, and more free from trammels, to take it up? The Land question, and the Church question, and the Education question, are lying ready for Mr. DISRAELI's manipulation. They are untouched; and they offer to genius and wisdom a golden opportunity which true magnanimity would seize with an avaricious grasp. A few days more, and the programme of Ministers, with reference to Ireland, will be before the world, and we will then know whether Mr. DISRAELI is really a statesman, anxious to signalize his term of office by solid and progressive legislation—by measures of impartial and inflexible justice, or whether he is a mere placeman, playing a selfish game, and anxious only for the temporary success of an adventurer."

Meantime, upon the really pressing and paramount question of efficient legislation which you defer till Tuesday,—the all-important question of Ireland,—the national voice is not for this or for that statesman, not for this or for that party even, but for the right, the sufficient, and the remedial measure. Whoever gives it to us is, for the nonce, the leader of the country. The one concession on which the Liberal party insists is, that justice shall be done to that part of the Nation of which you spoke so delicately as "an interesting portion." What the Nation wants, and must have, is not the scheme of any particular section, but a course of action as regards the grievances of Ireland—and, above all, as regards the burden and insult of an alien Church—which will satisfy Ireland, and so far make her reconciled. Less will not merely be useless, but will certainly be followed by a great deal more than this. It is not an adverse party, it is an imperial crisis, which exacts action from you; and I trust that those behind you understand the position as well as you do. History will efface your administration from her tablets with a contemptuous stroke of the pen, if you and your Cabinet try to dodge the stern necessities of the hour, with make-believe professions and ingenious delays. You promise the Nation a policy on Tuesday, and undertake, if it should be found fault with, to defend it. The Nation awaits the declaration; and if the spirit of that policy be large, bold, and satisfying, the Liberal Press should be the last to spoil a great measure by hurrying its authors faster than its many details can allow well-meaning men to go. A clear and honest pledge of justice to Ireland will begin to heal her wounds, and hush her cries, long before that justice can be finally consummated. But the pledge must be clear and honest, for her case is past the reach of legislative globules; and the next Parliament will show scant patience towards those, on either side, who trifle with the principle of religious equality, or with the deadly peril which troubles Britain while Ireland is angry and unhappy. Ireland has been too long the battle-ground of parties, the result of whose conflicts was not designed to, nor never did, affect the country beneficially. Whig and Tory have each in turn taken up Irish grievances, in order to gain a temporary advantage over an opponent. Professional agitators and frightened placemen have used them to effect their own objects; and, their end gained, the Irish question, which had been so used, was then flung away as a very worthless thing.



But there are Tories who cry out for Reform as lustily as the most suspicious Democrat or the most obnoxious agitator. There are some Tories who boldly assert that there are grave and numerous evils to be redressed, and amongst them they give the Established Church the first place. Nor will the abolition of this monster iniquity satisfy them. They call for a settlement of the land question, and, despairing of even these remedies being sufficient to effect the object in view, they advocate a partial repeal of the Union, and dazzle the Irish people with faint glimpses of a local Legislature attending to the immediate wants and providing for the more pressing exigencies of the Nation. There is a poetical tinge about their programme which brings it inconveniently near the hallucinations which make the Tories believe in the extinction of Fenianism by Royal smiles and the restoration of public security by an address. Nevertheless, their views are solid and seasonable, and deserve more than passing consideration. And here I must remark that there is something strange and significant, not merely in the prominence given to the question of Repeal, but in the manner in which that prominence is received and acquiesced in. A few months ago it would have been rank treason to moot the subject; now, Tories like Mr. BUTLER JOHNSTONE, and ultra-loyalists like Mr. SEYMOUR, discuss it seriously, and the more it is discussed the less dreadful does it appear, either as a remedy or a change. One is almost tempted to believe in the possibility of its realization. Every time it is brought on the *tapis*, bright hopes and glorious visions spring from it with renewed freshness. It is impossible to shut out from the mind the associations with which it is connected, or the prospects which it shadows forth. The Irish people think of the old time when the Irish Lords and Commons sat in College Green, and constituted a Parliament as free and independent as that of Britain itself. They think of the genius that was there displayed—of the patriotism which corruption could not stifle—of the courage which power could not subdue—and of the honor which intrigue could not taint. They recall the memories of such patriotic men as LUCAS, FLOOD, BURKE, and GRATTAN, PLUNKET, and CURRAN; and they think of what Ireland would be to-day with such talent to serve her, such zeal to support her, such wisdom to direct and guide her. They think of all that has been lost during the sixty years in which Ireland has had no nursery of such greatness, and of all that might have been gained had it been preserved in its purity and integrity. But then the question arises,—Is it possible to realize the aspirations which naturally spring from these historical associations? Are the circumstances of the country, and the peculiar relations of the empire, such as would render indulgence in the hope something more substantial than reliance on a shadow? I fear not. All discussion about the undoubted advantages of Repeal is rendered vain by the certainty of its present and prospective impossibility. England will never, of her own free will, revoke the Union which she labored so hard to establish, and which she deemed cheaply bought by lasting infamy and dishonor. As obstinate in retention as she is unscrupulous in acquisition, she will not resign the advantage which it cost her so much to obtain, and which pride and interest make it imperative to uphold. This being so,—Is it worth while to disturb the popular mind by vain representations of visionary schemes, and to direct popular strength from what is within its reach to what is beyond its grasp? I think not: the policy is a fatal one, and can only eventuate in increased in-



jury to the country that pursues it. O'Connell wasted the most precious years of his life in the advocacy of Repeal. The millions who cheered him on, in his efforts, the host of talent that seconded his labor, the mighty influences which he commanded would have been powerful enough to have accomplished almost anything but the one thing, which seemed to vanish as it was approached. Had the monster meetings which were held at Tara and elsewhere—had the burning eloquence which swayed the masses been directed towards a settlement of the Church question or the Land question, all traces of ascendancy would be now buried in the dust, and a happy, prosperous, and contented peasantry would be flourishing on the soil. In 1843, it was possible to have wrung from the British Parliament any measures short of a repeal of the Union. The pursuit of the latter scheme kept everything else in abeyance, and no advance was made on the road of Reform, which was not only accessible, but which invited advancement. Many Reformers are in danger of falling into a similar mistake at the present time. The occasion is ripe for action. The British Parliament can no longer refuse to deal with the Irish difficulty, nor can Britain afford, in the face of Europe, to rest satisfied with the ignoble quackery which has been the shame of her legislation. Events have done for the country what the genius of O'Connell accomplished in his day. A rare and golden opportunity has presented itself. If wisely, boldly, and honestly utilized, it may prove the most blessed period of Ireland's chequered history; if thrown away, it may never come again. Nothing would so much contribute to the disaster, I fear, as the rash, injudicious advocacy of impracticable schemes. This would be to put the game completely in the hands of the Tory Government. Nothing would please Tory statesmen better than to waste session after session in useless debates, upon topics which they are determined never seriously to entertain, and so make those precious moments pass idly and fruitlessly, which might be turned to great and lasting advantage. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that every step taken in the right direction brings a Nation nearer to the end at which it aims. Every petty reform, every trifling acquisition, every insignificant gain, are stepping-stones to higher and more important results. The abolition of the Established Church ten years ago, the settlement of the Land question five years ago, would have done more for Repeal than any amount of terrorism and agitation can now effect. The plain duty, then, of Reformers is to grasp at what is tangible, and not to overlook what is within their ready reach. If ordinary prudence and firmness be manifested, a few months must witness the downfall of ascendancy, and a fairer settlement of the land question than has yet been attempted. With this vantage-ground, the way to further triumphs will be easy; but, if the golden opportunity be wasted in empty speculations and idle dreams—if, above all, excuses for inaction be given to those who are only too willing to take advantage of them—Irishmen and their representatives will deserve to remain in the position in which they are, and to bear to the end, the badge of servitude which they have borne so long. Men like you can afford to be empirics at the country's expense; but, for those who are enlightened by suffering, there is one plain duty, and that is, to insist, without a moment's delay, on the redress which is attainable, and then they can prepare, with renewed strength, for fresh struggles and greater triumphs.

A great opportunity is about being afforded to the British Parlia-



ment for proving its efficiency, as the main instrument of the Government of the United Queendom. On Tuesday next the member for Cork will submit to the House of Common men a proposition which justice calls for, which policy ought to approve of, and which it is impossible to ignore without an abnegation of the rights and principles which are essential to the preservation of society. The course adopted by Mr. MAGUIRE can neither be overlooked nor contemned. His position and character entitle him to take a leading part in all questions affecting his country's interests. These interests have been dear and precious to him. He has sacrificed much for their maintenance, and he has never once placed the performance of a public duty in subordination to a personal feeling or a personal prejudice. When such a man speaks, it is more than folly to discard his warnings and repudiate his advice. He is a skillful physician administering to his country's ills—a tried and trusted one,—with experience, with sincerity, and with devotion; and what he suggests and advises should be received with respectful consideration, and weighed with the calmness and caution of judicial prudence, if not with the impartiality of judicial integrity. No one denies that unfortunate Ireland is sadly in need of remedial measures. No one denies that she needs some strong hand to drag her out of the mire in which she is plunged. No one denies that, for centuries, she has been almost the scandal of civilization. I do not here attach blame to any party in the State for faults that can only be remedied by advanced enlightenment and new born zeal; but I do expect that some word of comfort, some promise of hope, some strong manifestation of rigid consistency, and some reliable determination of pursuing an inflexible purpose, will be put forth at the moment when expectation excited to the utmost, makes confidence a necessity of trust, and faith indispensable to security. The opportunity is great in its resources. Men like Mr. MAGUIRE do not turn favorable occasions for national good to selfish purposes. He and those who think and work with him are the links which bind the Irish people to the British Constitution. They stand between the specters of the past and the visions of the future. Anxious to soothe animosity, to wipe away antipathies, to promote union, and to generate that identity of feeling and purpose without which the peace of society is an impossibility, they are the real friends of the important interests of which prejudice represents them to be the enemies. This is the time to speak out. The hour of vacillation and of that greater evil, deliberate deception, is past. The public mind has been aroused; the almost dying expectation of the Nation's mind has been revived, and if disappointment and despair ensue, if the next debate end in mere vague promises, idle platitudes, or ingenious devices, for the perpetuation of the old system of delay, it cannot be wondered at, that, even the soberest of politicians will distrust the State machinery, which its guardians either dread or refuse to put to the test of efficiency. In every sense of the word has the Irish debate of the next week been a long postponed debate,—postponed not merely for the last few weeks, but for the last half-century. It so happens, however, that the circumstances of the present year, as I have already observed, are especially favorable to a fair discussion. While the responsible Government is not expected to lay its large and final measures on the table of the House at once, the Opposition, of course, has no idea of bringing in any ready-drawn Bill. Nevertheless, without entering into details, public writers may discuss the great



principles of a true Irish policy, and the leading men of the Imperial Legislature may lay down the broad lines of the schemes by which they hope to regenerate Ireland, and give peace and prosperity to the people. It is also pretty clear that we shall not be precipitated into a party fight,—at all events this year. In the first place, the Liberals are well inclined to give you ample opportunity to try your hand on a task much more difficult than the “Education” of your party; and this sense of justice is quickened by another consideration. A dissolution just now,—and you have that card in your own hand,—would be exceedingly inconvenient to individual members, since it would have to be followed by another next year to test the new Reform Bill; and it would be additionally awkward for the Liberal party, as the result of a general election now would be determined by the present restricted constituencies. The Nation shall therefore probably see what is rarely observed in the House of the Common men,—a clear contest of principles and policies,—a discussion not encumbered with details of clauses and amendments, nor complicated with party issues, but opening up the whole question in the broadest fashion. Still it cannot be a mere debate. Whatever is said this year will not only be heard with eager attention by the House and by the country, but will be twice tested. The new constituencies called into life by the Reform Bill will pronounce on the schemes foreshadowed by our statesmen next week. And next year, in Parliament itself, those schemes must be embodied in Bills to be laid on the table of the House, and fought out clause by clause. A serious responsibility, therefore, rests both on the Ministry and on the Opposition. It would be madness in any leading man to propose a scheme that cannot bear the rough popular scrutiny of the hustings, and that has not in it the elements of a practical solution, capable of being expressed in the precise clauses of a workable Act of Parliament, and likely to be carried out in Ireland itself. It is clear that any schemes with any probability of success must be calculated to promote the prosperity of Ireland, in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the Irish people, and must be acceptable, when explained, to the common intelligence of the majority of the British people. On the two great subjects,—the Church and the Land,—there is no lack of proposals, and it may be useful to state them in brief.

The question of the Irish Church has naturally called forth a crowd of propositions. A few extreme Tories say, “Leave things as they are;” but these are in a minority. A moderate section, represented by Lord HARDWICKE, Lord ELLENBOROUGH, and the *Quarterly Review*, would leave the revenues of the Anglican Church in Ireland untouched, but would give the Roman Catholic priests a direct endowment, drawn, like the *Regium Donum*, from the Consolidated Fund. Then come a series of proposals based on the distribution of the revenues of the Anglican Irish State Church amongst Anglicans, Romanists, and Presbyterians. Lord RUSSELL suggests that the division should take place strictly according to population; that the Anglicans, who now have all, should have little more than an eighth, the Presbyterians a little less than an eighth, and the Roman Catholics six-eighths. Mr. AUBREY DE VERE would divide the Church revenues amongst the three sects, with a due consideration of their numbers and wants,—for instance, taking note of the fact that the Protestant is a married and the Roman Catholic an unmarried clergy, and also of the well-built churches and glebe houses already owned by the Anglican Church. Mr. HERBERT



STACK proposes to divide the tithes,—which constitute the main part of the revenues, and which, in truth, are a burden merely on land,—not according to population, but according to the division of the soil amongst the various Sects, so that no Irish occupier should help to support any save his own clergy. Ignoring the priests who wished to be ignored, Mr. STACK would give the money to local committees of Roman Catholic laymen for the building and the repairing of their Churches, and at their discretion for strictly religious uses. Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD suggests that any Sect forming a majority of two-thirds in any parish should take *all* the Church revenues appropriated to that locality. Mr. BRIGHT would give each Sect a million of money, and secularize the remainder of the capital represented by the Church revenues, applying it to such useful ends as education. Others propose the total secularization of the revenues of the Anglican and the Presbyterian Churches, the two endowed bodies to the level of the Roman Catholic Church, which is supported by voluntary contributions. It is obvious that each set of plans has its own difficulties. The scheme of endowment of the Roman Church out of the Consolidated Fund would arouse two foes,—the old No Popery feeling, and the dislike of the British people to more taxes. Moreover, it is open to the objection that the priests have signified their resolution not to have it. That objection also applies to all the schemes of distribution, excepting Mr. HERBERT STACK's, which would not endow the priests, but would return to the Roman Catholic laity their own tithes, and, if advisable, would restrict the application of the funds to Church-building. Mr. ARNOLD's scheme has one distinct characteristic,—it would leave Protestantism still as much established in Ulster as at present; for in few parishes of that province could the Romanists command a two-thirds majority; but it is open to the objection that it would introduce a sectarian election contest in every locality. The distinctive feature of Lord RUSSELL's distribution is, that it offers to the priests a boon bigger than that suggested by any other plan. Its weakness may be found in its making too direct an offer, and treating with polite contempt the declaration of the priests that they will not accept the money. But if those who would distribute have to overcome the difficulty arising from this refusal of the priests, those who would disendow have their own difficulty: how are the funds to be applied? To primary education, is the general answer; but the answer forgets that the Roman Catholics of Ireland are beginning to feel as great a dislike to State schools as to State Churches, and that they want to have their education as well as their religion in the hands of their own priests. I have thus stated to you—(*not, of course, for the purpose of imparting information, but simply in order to show you, and other notable politicians, that the propositions of statesmen are now thoroughly comprehended and analyzed on the outside of Parliament, as well as within its walls*),—the problem and the rival solutions, merely indicating the peculiar characteristics of each, and suggesting “difficulties.” But then, in some people's dictionaries “difficulties” are simply obstacles to be overcome.

On the land question the rival schemes are more numerous and even more divergent in principle. Mr. FORTESCUE's Bill proposed, that, in the absence of written contracts to the contrary, or written prohibitions from his Soil-Lord, a tenant should be at liberty to improve, and should obtain on eviction full compensation for his improvements. Lord MAYO's Bill proposes that the tenant should register all changes; and



as regards some obvious improvements, such as removing old fences, building new fences, and clearing the land of stones, should have an absolute right to compensation; but should not obtain compensation for other improvements, if the Soil-Lord had notified his refusal, with grounds, to the Board of Works, which would act as a kind of mediator between the Soil-Lord and the cultivator of the soil. Mr. BRIGHT suggests that the Government should buy large estates of absentee Soil-Lords, and sell them in small lots, on easy terms, to the Irish farmers. Lord DUFFERIN has a scheme of the same kind, with the difference that the land is to be let at a fair fixed rent, but on strict conditions as to good farming. Mr. MILL proposes that the Soil-Lord should be compelled to let at a fair rent, the State giving him compensation for his loss. There are many other schemes, apparently but not really distinct. For example, Mr. BUTT's plan, though differing in detail, is essentially the same as Mr. MILL's. In fact, all Irish land measures are divisible into (1) those that simply propose compensation for improvements; (2) those which propose that the State should buy land, and let it at a fair and fixed rent, or sell it on easy terms to small holders; (3) those which, with or without compensation to the Soil-Lords, would compel them to let at a fair fixed rent, or sell on easy terms to small holders. It is not likely that Parliament will next week decisively pronounce on the positive form of any large measure, but in the tendency of the debate the Nation shall probably be able to discern the principles of new legislation. I have on this, as on the Irish Church question, simply stated the case at present. I shall have many opportunities of discussing the probable advantages and disadvantages of the rival schemes. For the Liberal party two principles are clear, and are universally accepted. First, there must be complete equality of all Irish Churches, to be thoroughly carried out in one way or another, either by levelling up or by levelling down,—but at all events to be carried out. Secondly, the right of the tenant in the unexhausted improvements wrought by his own toil or capital must be as thoroughly legalized as the property of the Soil-Lord in the land.

At a time when every embryo statesman is trying his 'prentice han' on the Irish question, it is a real relief, as well as a positive pleasure, to hear the opinions of men like JOHN BRIGHT and JOHN STUART MILL, no matter whether the majority of the Nation agree with or differ from their views. That the views of these statesmen will not be very unreasonable, may be presumed from their well known ability, while their acknowledged honesty and straightforwardness will be an ample guarantee that their theories and principles are put forward in good faith. In a pamphlet published a few days since, entitled, "England and Ireland," JOHN STUART MILL has discussed at length the causes of disaffection in Ireland, and the conclusion is not very flattering to English rule. He declares as his conviction that there is, probably, no other civilized Nation which, if the task of governing Ireland had happened to devolve on it, would not have shown itself more capable of that work than England has hitherto done. He assigns his grounds most explicitly. First, he says:—"There is no other civilized Nation which is so conceited of its own institutions, and of all its modes of public action, as England is; and, secondly, there is no other civilized nation which is so far apart from Ireland in the character of its history, or so unlike it in the whole constitution of its social economy; and none, therefore, which, if it applies to Ireland the modes of thinking



and the maxims of government which have grown up within itself, is so very certain to go wrong." Nevertheless, that is just the very way in which England has always ruled unfortunate Ireland. On the Land question, the feeling of the people of the two countries has been always different, mainly and probably because the circumstances under which they were generated were different. Nevertheless, it has been always sought to rule Ireland in this very matter on the system which suited England. Mr. MILL does not approve of the English Land system, but he knows that it is rendered tolerable by having been rooted in the traditions of the English people. Economically unsound in England, it is far more injurious in Ireland, where, besides its radical defects, it has to encounter the antipathy of the people, who have always declared against the burthen it imposed on them. What remedy does Mr. MILL propose for the present unsatisfactory state of affairs in Ireland? He professes a belief that to hold Ireland permanently by the old bad means is, simply, an impossibility, and that the mass of the British people would not permit the attempt. The time, he thinks, is come when the Democracy of one country will join with the Democracy of another, rather than back their own ruling authorities in putting it down. He is no advocate for the separation of the two countries, and does not think that Federal union between them could last. The proposal which he makes is briefly as follows:—Let a Commission be appointed under the authority of Parliament, similar to that appointed for the commutation of tithes, whose duty it shall be to examine every farm which is let to a tenant, and commute the present variable to a fixed rent. There must, he declares, be compulsory powers, and a strictly judicial inquiry. It must be ascertained in each case, as promptly as is consistent with due investigation, what annual payment would be an equivalent to the Soil-Lord for the rent he now receives (provided that rent be not excessive), and for the present value of whatever prospect there may be of an increase, from any other source than the peasant's own exertions. This annual sum should be secured to the Soil-Lord, under the guarantee of the State. He should have the option of receiving it directly from the national treasury, by being inscribed as the owner of consols sufficient to yield the amount. Those Soil-Lords who are the least useful in Ireland, and on the worst terms with their tenantry, would probably accept this opportunity of severing altogether their connexion with the Irish soil. Whether this was the case or not, every farm not worked by the proprietor would become the permanent holding of the existing tenant, who would pay either to the Soil-Lord or to the State the fixed rent which had been decided upon; or less, if the income which it was thought just that the proprietor should receive were more than the tenant could justly be required to pay. The tenant should pay the full rent which was adjudged to the former proprietor, unless special circumstances should render it unjust to require so much. Should such circumstances exist, the State should lose the difference. The proposition has been, and will continue for some time, to be fiercely assailed. It is, however, both on account of its subject and its author, eminently deserving of calm consideration at the hands of both Soil-Lords and tenants. But, in order to make sufficient progress in beneficial legislation, with respect to these and other important questions, the Nation must have leaders who are both able and ready to lead,—and followers and supporters that shall be willing to follow and sustain them in their conquering marches.



It is undoubtedly the case, however, that the party of the majority, alike in the House of the Common men and throughout the country, is not in proper fighting order; and although its leader is ever ready to lead, it is a great deal too true that some of the followers will not follow. In proof of that fact, we need look no farther than to the Treasury bench. You are a Minister in power, and, great as your personal qualities may be, you enjoy but a limited confidence in the country, and represent in the Chamber a minority so contracted, that you retain your place only by doing what would not drive the majority to extremes; and you retain your post upon the same stern condition. This could not possibly have occurred if the majority of three hundred and seventy who owe allegiance to the principles loyally asserted by Mr. GLADSTONE were as well drilled as their antagonists. There are a number of politicians who survive to represent the "dark ages" of Lord PALMERSTON. They are borne on the strength of the Liberal army, but in their minds they are deserters from the flag; and the disloyalty which they satirize is chiefly exemplified by themselves. By "leaders who don't lead," they really mean "leaders who don't lead in the old, comfortable convenient fashion." With them, Mr. GLADSTONE'S cardinal sin is, that he is capable of such pestilent fidelity to his duty as even to resign office rather than forfeit political consistency. You derive such "help and comfort" from this Adullamitish band as a General does from the spies and cowards in the enemy's camp—they are useful, but not decent, allies. Their disaffection is one principal cause why you gained your position; the other cause is, that you hold in your hand the weapon of a dissolution. A double and diverse terror oppresses the minds of all these Adullamites, and of a certain number of other senators who go into Parliament for social and personal purposes, rather than to pass righteous laws. Those amateur legislators are now on their good behavior, as regards the things they say and do before the vast new constituencies which the Household Suffrage Bill has originated; and yet, on the other hand, if they push you into a corner, they dread lest you should plunge them into the cost and risk of an intermediate election. So they want a leader who will make things pleasant, and who will join you, the Prime Minister, in helping everybody of suspected opinions through this critical session with a character ready whitewashed for the hustings. Upon men of this moral stamp no arguments but those of fear will have any effect; and public writers should simply point out to Mr. BOUVERIE and his like, that if they have the smallest wish to sit for boroughs after the dangerous date when the new *régime* begins, and the bribery judges are *in banco*, they had better make up their minds to drop the rôle of "followers who don't follow." To honest and consistent Liberals, I would point out what is the strength and the weakness of the present singular situation. Making what allowances they must for the disloyal elements in their ranks, Mr. GLADSTONE'S side of the House is really in power. You reign most constitutionally without ruling; you are—and no man knows it better than you do—Prime Minister *quam diu bene se gesserit*—king only during good behavior. Indispensable to your own side, you perfectly well understand that you may be Premier just so long as you do the work required by the Nation, in the shape of measures dictated by the opinions of the day. Mr. GLADSTONE'S real junction at present is almost exactly that of the Roman "Tribune of the people," who could veto any and every "rogation." He, with his majority behind him, sits as the *ex officio* judge



of the conduct of the Government to say whether it is doing its duty, and, the moment it defaults, to force it up to the mark of its "truly Liberal policy." Now, the Nation not only has it on record, but can see from the nature of the circumstances, that this position of affairs may furnish most excellent results. The influence of the present complication on the cherished doctrine of ministerial responsibility may be open to question; but the enactment of Household Suffrage has already shown that the immediate fruits, in the shape of measures framed and passed, may be satisfactory to all who regard Parliament as a chamber designed for the passing of good laws, and not for the tickling of individual vanities, or, to quote an American sage, for "the filling of private dripping-pans with public grease." There is no saying, indeed, what may not be accomplished by the legatees of the Tory Earl of the Turf, under a "truly Liberal policy," if the Liberal party only discharge faithfully its present duty as an army of observation, watching and preparing the political ground for its grand resumption of active work, with the Nation for a constituency. But, to be ready for the hour of advance, and for the performance of existing duties, it is absolutely necessary that the party should profit by the lesson of Mr. BOUVIERIE'S bitter veracities. Let no man wait till Mr. GLADSTONE is tired of being honest and earnest: that hour will not arrive; and the country, wherever its representatives may be, is close behind him. The Liberals *must* have better drill; they *must* have sharper discipline; or the drumming-out just abolished in the service will be largely re-introduced into public life at the next elections. Mr. GLADSTONE is the leader of the Liberal party—first, by the unanimous choice of the country, which also chooses its followers; next, by his consummate political and personal gifts; and, lastly, by the cordial adhesion of all that large section of the Opposition which will survive Household Suffrage to see the new House assemble. The task before us may be divided into two grand stages. In the first, we have, steadfastly and rigidly, to watch the operations of the Government; in the second, we shall have to resume the operations for ourselves; but, with a view to the ultimate results, the earlier stage is not less important than the later. The Ministry is pledged to continue the series of "truly Liberal measures," and the Liberals have to see that the measures answer to the pledge, making them do so if they fail. The better they are rendered now, the larger will be the infusion of new life into the constituencies, and the greater, therefore, the access of strength to our own ranks after the completion of the process. But, for the due execution of their duty in that preliminary state, they must have the most unbroken vigilance, the sharpest sight, the most united action. And the self-same discipline that will enable them to make the amplest use of the preparatory period, will afford the most wholesome regimen to drill them for a steady and energetic advance the very moment that the hour for action strikes. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary for honest men, on principle, and for the less earnest, from prudential motives, that there should be an end to the mutinous folly of the past year. We must close up our files, stand shoulder to shoulder, obey our leader, with "eyes right," and less talking in the ranks; so that we may be ready for organized action, and for *our* exposition of a "truly Liberal policy." It is to Mr. GLADSTONE'S high qualities as a leader that we owe the tenure of our ground at all: he stands, where he ought to stand—in the forward place which he took up in resigning office to ensure Reform. All those



who wish the Nation to count them as true Liberals must forthwith advance to his side, and stand ready to fight there, not less honestly than he himself means to fight. The Liberal cause wants those who "won't run away;" not the noisy gentlemen, who are so great in speech and so very small in energetic action.

There are men whose lives and actions realize and display a series of beautiful ideas, and not only adequately fulfill a noble mission, but afford an instructive illustration of beneficial principles. Britain, happily for herself, has never been wanting in such characters. Even in the darkest hour of Ireland's history some streak of patriotic light has dawned upon her, and the voice of her wailing has not always been tuned to the tones of despair. Her faith in Justice, and her courage to denounce oppression, have been sustained by the patriotic promoters of her cause, and it is consoling to think that time does not exhaust the list of adherents who are dutiful in all things, and as ready for sacrifice as service; who have repeatedly offered with unreserve the highest tribute which honesty can pay to patriotism, and gave the strongest proof of the sincerity which constitutes the real test of this rare political virtue. It is no exaggeration of merit, or flattery of worth, to say that Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. BRIGHT, Mr. MILL, hold amongst disinterested British politicians the first place. Their labors, their trials, their consistency, their honor,—the virtues which ennoble the citizen and rarely distinguish the politician,—combine to give them a pre-eminence sacred from a universality as well as from a homeliness, which combine to render it doubly valuable and important. Even those who differ from them in opinion, and who regard their opinions as dangerous to society, must admire the candor which is above the artifice of misrepresentation, and the courage which scorns to stoop to the subterfuge of concealment. I am sometimes, indeed, surprised that a man of Mr. BRIGHT's earnestness and simplicity of character is not discouraged at the indifference and the positive hostility displayed on the subject which he holds to be so very important to Ireland's welfare. At the same time, his example cannot fail to have a beneficial effect; and he himself must imbibe a salutary lesson, as well as impart a salutary influence. Mr. BRIGHT's leading idea is to keep dinning into the ears of the British people the pressing wants and grievances of Ireland. This is precisely one of the things which is required. Ireland is misgoverned at the present day,—because she is misunderstood. The British people are not, however, wedded to injustice, nor are they disposed to patronize it. If the British mind could be rightly and persistently appealed to by the friends and patriots of Ireland,—if the irresistible logic of facts could be properly employed,—the people of Ireland could hopefully look forward to a full measure of long-delayed and much needed Justice. We want in Parliament more men who will devote themselves to this special task of enlightenment and compunction. There are a few Irish members who have done good service in this particular line of duty, but their ranks require to be daily strengthened. The Irish people should not be indifferent to the grave crisis that is at hand. It is their fortune and their future that is at stake; and although failure has discouraged them, and disappointment has almost crushed hope in their brains, they should rouse themselves to the duties of the hour, and boldly accept the challenge flung to them on the one side, and embrace the tender of help offered them on the other. The No-Popery and Orange party are leaving nothing undone



to preserve ascendancy and perpetuate the reign of intolerance and bigotry. Their meetings are designed to arouse the worst passions of the mob, and to kindle, if necessary, the flames of civil war. It is unmanly and ignominious to endure such attacks in silence, or to bear the insults which they convey. It is time that the voice of the majority of the people of Ireland should be heard, and that four millions and a-half of the population should drown by their unanimous expression of opinion the clamor of the little gatherings that presume to represent Protestant opinion and feeling in the country. It is impossible to calculate the benefits that will flow from the annihilation of the Church Establishment. The removal of this monster grievance will be the first step towards the pacification and prosperity of the country. It will break down the barriers which at present divide Sect from Sect. It will enable men to meet on a common platform, and consult for their common interests. It will substitute peace for strife, and brotherly love for social discord; and it will bring into vigorous life those great principles of freedom and equality which are the bulwarks of human happiness. The Irish people ought instinctively to know and appreciate these truths, and they should rouse themselves from their lethargy, unite with the people of England and Scotland, and strike a blow for their own rights. The contest concerns Ireland, and Ireland alone, and if Ireland be indifferent to its results,—Who can blame England and Scotland if they, too, should prove apathetic in the end, and leave to those who ought to work the reward which their exertions deserve?

LORD MALMESBURY, in the gilded House of the Lords, of gentle blood and pure flesh, was somewhat more communicative than you,—his plebeian chief,—as he announced on last Thursday evening that a Bill on popular education will be soon, if possible, introduced. The most interesting element, however, of his speech consisted in the practical proof that LORD MALMESBURY himself has been selected as the Ministerial leader in the House of the Lords,—in the Upper Chamber of the Hereditary and Born-legislators of Britain. For the laudable purpose of removing what he conceived to be an unjust prejudice against his fitness for the post of leading the Lords, he attempted to explain that he had not committed a mistake which was lately imputed to him by the active *word-takers*, the newspaper reporters. It seems now, according to LORD MALMESBURY'S own emendations, that he told the House of *the rich blue-blooded Nobles and Pious Prelates* that your Administration would be formed, not “*if possible*,” but “*as soon as possible*.” The correction,—the result of a measure of reflection, or the effect of a suggestion from the lately breath-blown noble, the Tory idea-maker,—to a certain extent, diminishes the want of confidence which may be felt in LORD MALMESBURY'S tact and accuracy of language. When the representative of your Government had, as he thought, triumphantly defended himself against the ugly charge of verbal awkwardness, LORD RUSSELL proceeded to commit, what was considered by far-seeing politicians to be, a much graver blunder than the confusion of phrase which had been attributed to LORD MALMESBURY. It was at least somewhat premature to declare that he,—(the once *No-Popery Whigling*),—had no confidence in a Government which has not yet disclosed its intentions: and it was gratuitously discourteous to take the opportunity of denouncing the deception, which is LORD RUSSELL'S equivalent for your improved process of Tory Education. LORD DERBY'S



Government had many faults, but it never, I think, "openly avowed that it does not mean what it says, but says one thing and means another." The inconsistency of the Tory party in dealing with Parliamentary Reform has been discussed often enough; and there was no special public cause why Lord RUSSELL should put himself into a raging passion on the occasion of your accession to the office of Prime Minister. The contrast which formed the climax of his unseasonable and envious invective was characteristic of his small-boy egotism, and extremely amusing. "*It is a course of conduct, I must say,*"—uttered the once famous No-Popery Lord,—"*which not only men like Mr. Fox, Earl GREY, or Lord ALTHORP would have spurned, but which men like Mr. PITT, Lord LIVERPOOL, the Duke of WELLINGTON, and Sir ROBERT PEEL would likewise have disdained to adopt.*" The Tories of the present are not only far inferior to the Whig demigods, but they are unworthy even to be ranked with the heroes of their own erroneous credence. No one would find fault with, or blame Lord RUSSELL for attacking the measures of even the Government, of which you are the presiding genius, if he thinks them inexpedient or unjust, or even for seeking on suitable opportunities the restoration of his own party to power; but he ought to be well aware that it would be at present extremely difficult to form a Liberal Ministry, and you have taken good care that he has no official knowledge of your intended policy. In his recent pamphlet, Lord RUSSELL himself lately professed his desire to support the Government in passing any Irish measure which corresponded with his own opinions of expediency and Justice. The burst of small-minded irritation which occurred on Thursday evening was probably merely incidental,—or consequent upon an overflow of aristocratic blue-blood to the region of the Brain containing the Organs of SELF-ESTEEM and LOVE OF APPROBATION. Yes! on Thursday evening, the 5th of March, 1868, Earl RUSSELL delivered himself of a spiteful speech, small in every sense of the word, and characterized by more than his usual littleness and sourness: to call it bitter would be to dignify it. But Earl RUSSELL did a very unwise and petulant thing when he recurred to your Edinburgh speech at all. Mr. GLADSTONE, however, in the House of the Common men, was judiciously silent; and Mr. BOUVERIE commented on your cunningly contrived speech, in the character of an unattached and semi-malcontent Liberal. It was probably very unnecessary to remind you,—now the Plebeian Prime Minister of Great Britain, in spite of Whig and Tory ascendancy,—that you were not supported by a majority of the members of the House of the Common men, especially as Mr. BOUVERIE admitted that the anomalous position of the Government was explained by the disorganized state of the Opposition. "We have leaders that won't lead, and followers that won't follow. Instead of an organized party, we are little better than a rabble." The leaders that won't lead may be interpreted to mean Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. BRIGHT, and Mr. MILL; and Mr. BOUVERIE himself, I think, is not an unfair specimen of the followers that won't follow. A rabble, even if it constitutes a majority, is not prepared to succeed to power; and if Mr. BOUVERIE's description is accurate, as it is certainly founded on fact, it is useless to lament, for the present, the inconvenience of a Government supported only by a minority. It is very true that insecurity in the tenure of office accounts for administrative weakness, and Mr. BOUVERIE was justified in attributing the pusillanimity of the Government in dealing with Mr.



BEALES and his SUPPORTERS, to the entire Cabinet, rather than to the unfortunate HOME SECRETARY. The second illustration of the weakness of Lord DERBY's Ministry was derived from the commutation of the capital sentences of the Fenian convicts, in the Spring of 1867. On that occasion, the final decision of the Government represented the *General Wish* of the Community, and there is no cause to suppose or conclude that bad effects or injurious consequences have followed from the extension of mercy to the ringleaders of an abortive insurrection. The graver crime afterwards perpetrated at Manchester was duly punished,—according to the *Barbaric Practice of Public Murder*,—notwithstanding the logical remonstrances of enlightened philanthropists, and the maddened menaces of disaffected, because oppressed, Irishmen. But the Public Murders at Manchester did not prevent other outrages: they only rendered their own horrid character more familiar. The moral of Mr. BOUVERIE's speech was contained in the suggestion that there is, after all, no difference among moderate politicians, and that you,—as the new Prime Minister,—ought to have included in your Government members taken from the Liberal side of the House of the Common men. As Mr. BOUVERIE had already referred to Lord DERBY's failure in a similar experiment, he very probably scarcely intended that his words should be literally construed. Those representatives of the old Whig and Tory traditions who survive the next election, will soon find that they are no longer one another's opponents. The political descendants of Mr. FOX, Earl GREY, and Lord ALTHORP, will be forced to waive their natural superiority to the less virtuous caste which traces its descent to Mr. PITT, the Duke of WELLINGTON, and Sir ROBERT PEEL. For the present, amalgamation is premature, and the best service which you can perform to the entire Nation is to proceed in your work of Education. If you can persuade your party to accept the Liberal policy against which you have assuredly no prejudice of your own, it is possible that you may receive support from the followers who won't follow Mr. GLADSTONE. There is no desirable measure against which the Tories are pledged, as they were pledged and disposed to resist Parliamentary Reform; yet it is necessary to proceed with tact and caution, as many of the party are sore under the consciousness of inconsistency, and of extreme docility to your daring instructions. On the whole, the probabilities are in favor of your continuance in office during the present Session. In the course of next week your Irish policy will be announced; and it is not improbable that Mr. GLADSTONE will proceed to introduce Resolutions which will be ultimately equivalent to a vote of want of confidence in the Government. But it will be very difficult to unite a majority, either in a party demonstration, or in the affirmance of any special Irish policy not embodied in a Bill. There is, for the moment, I believe, no general anxiety that there should be a change of Government, and you are stronger, as your chief opponent is weaker, in the House of the Common men, than throughout the Nation. Impetuosity, irritability, and the habit of intellectual exaggeration, are not even observed by the great body of those who endure Mr. GLADSTONE's earnestness and eloquence; and, on the other hand, the gifts which have raised you to your high position can only be fully appreciated by personal observation. As it is impossible that Mr. GLADSTONE, even if he succeeded in ejecting you from office, should carry any comprehensive measure during the present Session, it is not desirable that time should be wasted in a change of Government.



MR. BOUVERIE'S burst of grief, on Thursday evening last, was not really a solo: there was a chorus behind the scenes. No one can have mingled much amongst Liberals of late without listening to woeful lamentations. Last year the British people were called upon to cry over the beautiful corpse of that dear deceased, the darling "British Constitution," traitorously slain by your unscrupulous conduct; but, this year, the wail of woe is raised for that once respectable army, the great Liberal party. Gentlemen go about in London, or to and fro between the clubs, shaking their heads, and muttering their woe at the disorganized condition of the Liberal party: according to Mr. BOUVERIE, "its leaders won't lead, its followers won't follow:" all is going wrong, and nobody knows what to do or say. Now, last year, I refused to share the sorrow of the poor old Whigs, definitely dished by Lord DERBY, with your deeply designed assistance. I saw no subject for regret in the not very great change wrought by your Bill,—that revolution, tempered by the payment of rates; and, this year, I am equally contemptuous of the political *Banshees*, who, in evening dress of the period, vex the drowsy ear of night with their grief. The Liberal party is disorganized;—But why? Simply on account of its singular success. What was the situation in 1866? The Liberals were like an army, which, while trying to capture a town, was watched and harassed by a force, that strove, as earnestly as it could, to make them raise the siege. Finally, it compelled the Liberals to retire; and, while they were recovering their strength for a new attack, lo! it assailed the town for them, and dismantled the fortifications. The Liberals walked in, rather bewildered at a success attained without a fight. This is the true secret of the present disorganization of the Liberal party. The Liberals were not the immediate victors of the day, though it was the fear of their future operations that compelled the Tories' change of tactics; and, missing the rapture of the combat and the glory of conquest, they were rather bewildered as they passed through the wide breach, and somewhat languid as they missed the stern joy that warriors feel in foemen worthy of their steel. They have now no foemen that they are sure will stand up against them. It may greatly concern some Whig lawyers that you—not Mr. GLADSTONE—are the dispenser of patronage; but, until I see a clear prospect that a change of Ministry will promote good measures, and stop bad Bills, I cannot feel any serious impatience about the mere occupation of office. The ancient obstructive Toryism that singly resisted, for the sake of resistance, is dead; it died with that fine old intellectual country gentleman, General PEEL,—peace to his political manes!—and, instead, the Nation has that policy which you speak of as "Conservative," when you are in Downing Street, and as "Truly Liberal," when you have to face the Opposition. But, does this feeling of content with their present position indicate that the Liberals shall be always satisfied with remaining on the Opposition benches? By no means. The Liberals must bear in mind, however, that the Tory party is very different from theirs. The Tory party is like those lower kind of organisms, that can exist without any particular head, tail, or important members. DICKENS describes a maker of artificial arms, legs, hands,—I believe, even trunks,—who told wondrous tales of mutilated gentlemen refitted:—"In fact, Sir," he added, "we want little beyond the vital principle." But you know well that your great Tory pupils do not even want that. Give them anything,—a "cry," half an idea, a well-established prejudice, a cramp



crotchet,—and they adhere as one man to it, and stick together in every road,—straight or crooked, muddy or clean. Now, the *Liberals* cannot do that. They are nothing, if not bound together by some grand principle of public importance.

You have, according to the received Newspaper language of the day, inaugurated your advent to the highest office in the realm by a characteristic, and in that sense becoming, innovation. A gentleman of the Press, and a veteran writer of leading articles and novels, may be pardoned for making the Newspapers his channels of communicating his latest fictions and epigrams to the outer world. As even the QUEEN explains herself in the *Times* to her subjects, sycophants, and worshippers when she is misunderstood, you, her ingenious PRIME MINISTER, may very properly make use of a precedent so august,—so supremely royal. Literary men, at any rate, ought not to be hasty to find fault with this remarkable testimony to the power of the *Fourth Estate*. The loss of dignity, or the violation of conventionalism which your letter may at first sight be thought to involve, is well purchased by the value of the precedent established. Henceforth Parliamentary debates may probably lose one of their most popular and exciting ingredients: a sharp personal explanation,—that mental salt which has kept the House of the Common men from stagnating on the lees of mere stupid business,—will soon, probably, be a thing of the past. The public, and the circulation of the daily papers, will reap the benefit; and a smart exchange of repartee and epigram and fusillade of vituperation, in the shape of letters to the *Times*, and other daily papers, between the PRIME MINISTER and an aged leader of the Opposition, will be more popular than speeches, and may certainly be made twice as pungent. At present the thing is in its infancy, and the public cannot demand from the first tentative and imperfect hint of a great principle that completeness which, no doubt, will one day develop its full capacities, when moulded by practice into perfection. Your letter must be judged with that charity which is extended to innovations and first attempts. As it stands, it can scarcely be accounted a success,—though, in a way, it displays the great capabilities of the new method of politics. To investigate it, I must be content to be a little tedious. Then, on Thursday evening, the 5th of March, 1868, Earl RUSSELL,—as I have already observed,—delivered himself, in the House of the Lords, of a very spiteful and snarling speech,—small and snappish in every sense of these terms. His exasperated Lordship said:—“In a speech delivered at Edinburgh, Mr. DISRAELI boasted, that, during seven years, he had been educating his party, with a view to bring about a much greater reduction of the Franchise, and what he would at one time have called “a greater degradation of the Franchise than any which his opponents had proposed.” Whereupon, the very next morning, you, writing from Downing Street,—just as Lord MACAULAY once wrote from Windsor Castle,—compose a circular to all the London papers, in which you say, that,—“*Nothing of the kind was said by you at Edinburgh.*” *Nothing of the kind*, be it observed; nothing equivalent to this, nothing like it, nothing of the sort. This is what you affirm you said at Edinburgh, and you affirm, also, it is true,—namely, “that the Tory party, after the failure of their Bill of 1859, had been educated for seven years on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, and, during that interval, had arrived at five conclusions, which, with their authority, you had at various times announced,—viz.: 1. That the measure should be complete. 2. That



the representation of no place should be entirely abrogated. 3. That there must be a real Boundary Commission. 4. That the County representation should be considerably increased. 5. That the Borough Franchise should be established on the principle of rating." Now, it may be asked,—Is it possible to ascertain accurately what you did really say at Edinburgh? The following are the exact words of that portion of the speech delivered by you at Edinburgh, which forms the subject in dispute between Earl RUSSELL and yourself. The extract is taken from the authorized, and I can have no doubt subsequently revised, edition of the speech in question, published in pamphlet form by WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS:—

"In 1859, you know what occurred. We were expelled from power by a resolution of Lord JOHN RUSSELL, that no settlement of the question of Parliamentary Reform would be satisfactory which did not involve the lowering of the Borough Franchise. We resisted that. We believed that it was a policy which ought not to be sanctioned by the House of Commons, unless it was definitely brought forward, and feeling confident that there was no mere degradation of the Borough Franchise that could bring any satisfactory settlement, we recommended her Majesty to dissolve Parliament upon that issue. We appealed to the country. The country did not give us a majority; and, therefore, both Parliament and the country were henceforth pledged to a lowering of the Franchise in Boroughs. Well, now, what happened in the memorable seven years which elapsed from 1859 to 1866, when Lord DERBY was again called to power, and when he did me the honor again to ask me to attempt to lead the House of Commons? Now, observe, my lords and gentlemen, that from the year 1860, when Lord PALMERSTON, in consequence of the pledge into which he had been entrapped by the conduct of Lord JOHN RUSSELL—because Lord PALMERSTON, in consequence of his engagement to Lord DERBY, was entirely opposed to the motion of Lord JOHN RUSSELL, and it was with great difficulty that, in 1859, he agreed to support it—see, I say, what has occurred in Parliament, on the subject of Reform, in these seven years. They commenced with the measure of Lord PALMERSTON, in 1863. That failed. They concluded with the measure of Lord JOHN RUSSELL, in 1866, which also failed; and, in the interval, there were all these separate motions of Mr. LOCKE KING, and of Mr. BAINES, of which we have heard. Therefore, during these years—from 1860 to 1866—the question of Parliamentary Reform was constantly before the public mind and the examination of Parliament. During that period of seven years, with the advice—I may say under the instruction of my colleagues in public life, after constant communication with them—during these seven years, I endeavored continuously to lay down the principles upon which, in our opinion, a measure of Parliamentary Reform ought to be founded. Now, mark this—because these are things which you may not have heard of in another speech which was made in this city of Edinburgh. We had to prepare the mind of the country—to educate, if it be not arrogant to use such a phrase—to educate our party on this subject of Reform. It is a large party, and its attention can only be obtained to the consideration of a great question by the pressure which is secured by frequent discussion. Now, what were the points which, not only with the concurrence of Lord DERBY and my colleagues,—some of whom are in this room,—what were the points that, during the course of these seven years, I tried to impress upon the conscience and conviction of the country? They were these. First of all, and by far the most important,—that a measure of Parliamentary Reform, whenever it was adopted, should be a complete and comprehensive one; that all the branches of the subject should be dealt with; that we would not be seduced, as was the habit of the Radical party after the failure of Lord PALMERSTON's comprehensive measure in 1860, into dealing with the question in detail. And for this simple reason,—that, if you deal with it in detail, you may indeed establish a Democratic Constitution. Take Mr. BAINES's question of the reduction of the Borough Franchise, which we have been accused of inconsistency in having opposed. Had Mr. BAINES carried a very large reduction in the Borough Franchise, without any reference to other portions of the subject, what would have happened? You would have had the next week, without any effective opposition,—for it was a part of the subject on which the opinion of the House of Commons was matured,—a great reduction in the County Franchise. Well, when you had got these two things, they would have rested, and in due time there would have been a dissolution of Parliament. And the county members would have been returned by the borough population that dwelt without the Parliamentary



boundaries of the Act of 1832. Well, that was the first great point which it was my duty always to impress upon Parliament,—that we could listen to no measure that was not complete. We contended that all the portions of Parliamentary Reform should be treated together, because we knew, that, in treating them all together, depended that political equilibrium which has hitherto prevailed in this country. That was the first condition. What was the second? During these seven years I had to vindicate the principles upon which disfranchisement and enfranchisement should take place. I said for the party with which I acted,—We cannot sanction any proposal for grouping boroughs; we contend that the representation of no place shall be entirely abrogated, and that, if you want to increase representation, you must look to a certain class of boroughs, and appeal to their patriotism—which appeal will, no doubt, be successful if recommended by a Ministry—to spare you one of their members. These were the principles upon which, for seven years, we insisted that disfranchisement and enfranchisement should take place. What was the third condition? I said,—No settlement of this question of Parliamentary Reform can be satisfactory unless you have a real and *bonâ fide* Boundary Commission—not a Boundary Commission that merely settles the boundaries of new boroughs, but that examines the boundaries of all existing Parliamentary Boroughs, and takes care that people who are *bonâ fide* borough occupiers shall not, under your sweeping measures of Reform, become suddenly county electors, and so change the whole character of the constituencies. What was the fourth point during these seven weary, but not unprofitable, years, I trust, that we insisted on, on the part of our friends? The fourth point was this,—That justice should at last be done to the majority of the English nation who live in counties; and that was to be done, not merely by giving representation to the towns that had sprung into importance since Lord GREY's Act in 1832—not merely by the issue of a Boundary Commission of the effective character I have sketched, but by adding a considerable number directly to their representatives. Now, what was the fifth point that we insisted upon, and which we supported by our vote; and through which vote, though at the time we had no anticipation of it, we became the responsible Ministers of the Crown? We insisted that the Borough Franchise should be established upon the principle of rating. Now, these are the five points that, during seven weary and toilsome years, I have, with the entire concurrence of those who share your entire confidence, endeavored in the House of Commons to impress upon the conscience and the conviction of Parliament. Now, my lords and gentlemen, what happened? There was a change of Government. Lord DERBY came into power. Lord DERBY had to consider the state of the country, and he resolved that, in his opinion, it was necessary to bring in a Reform Bill. We brought in a Reform Bill; we passed a Reform Bill; and now we ask you to consider,—Were the five points that, during these seven years, on the part of Lord DERBY, I impressed upon Parliament and the country—were they obtained or not? Our Reform Bill was a complete and comprehensive measure. We did vindicate the principles upon which enfranchisement and disfranchisement should take place; we did not abolish entirely the representation of any borough; we did successfully appeal to a certain class of boroughs to spare their surplusage of representation to supply the wants of the Constitution. We did do justice to the counties, by adding greatly to their direct representation, and enfranchising the towns that had grown into importance since 1832. We did issue a Boundary Commission, that has been, and is now, examining the Parliamentary boundaries in every part of the kingdom. And, fifth and lastly, we did establish a suffrage for the boroughs, founded on the principle of rating; and then I am told, when measures recommended to the country, during seven years, have been so triumphantly carried into effect, that we have done nothing, that it is our opponents who have suggested the Bill.”

In the *Times* of October 30th, 1867, you are reported, by telegraph, to have said:—“*During that period of seven years, I had to prepare the mind of the country, and to educate,—if it be not arrogant to use such a phrase,—to educate our party. It is a large party, and requires its attention to be called to questions of this kind with some pressure.*” Arrogant or not, the boast was true, and everybody felt it to be true. In the report of your speech, published by authority, and subject to your own careful revision, the above passage, which I have put into *Italics*, stands thus:—“During that period of seven years, we had to prepare the mind of the country, to educate,—if it be not arrogant to use such a phrase,—to educate our party. It is a large party, and its attention



can only be obtained to the consideration of a great question by the pressure which is secured by frequent discussion." The difference is very considerable, and can be very readily accounted for. Everybody who has ever spoken in public, knows what it is to see one's glowing rhetoric mercilessly displayed in the pitiless accuracy of stenography. The morning's penitence of the unfortunate diseased drunkard is not more severe and self-upbraiding than the resipiscence of the sobered rhetorician. When confronted by yourself, you may well have been astounded by your own audacity. You did what, probably, every one would have done. You went through the unpleasant duty which is known to that editorial and astute craft, of which I am proud to salute you,—the British PREMIER,—as a great ornament, as "*toning down.*" In your proof, you substituted "we" for "I;" and the disparaging estimate of the "large party," conveyed in the general expression that it required to be roused to questions of this kind by some "*pressure,*" was watered down in the cool seclusion of your study to the phrase, "*by the pressure which is secured by frequent discussion.*" The whole point, the whole gist, the whole sense and meaning of the argument, was lost by these crafty emendations; but the implied affront to the stupid party was got rid of. On the very face of it, the emendation was an after-thought; and internal evidence shows that you really did say at Edinburgh what you were reported to have said, and that you afterwards repented of what you had said, and tried to scramble out of a hobble by the publication of an authorized, but botched and cobbled report. Education is a process familiar enough; education can only be conducted by some pressure. We, or I, had to educate our party; consequently, we had to "*employ some pressure.*" This is all consequential, logical, and consistent. But educating a party by the pressure which is secured by frequent discussion, is sheer nonsense. To educate, implies an educator; I, or we, may be educators; but an educator who is "*a pressure secured by frequent discussion,*" is a blank, staring absurdity. What remains, then, is this, as the real account of the matter:—You actually spoke the Truth, though it involved arrogant, and almost contumelious language, when at Edinburgh you superbly claimed the glory of having educated your party, and put pressure upon them. You were afterwards alarmed at your own audacious truthfulness, and elected to be thought to have talked nonsense, when you came to print, not what you said, but what, upon reflection, you had come to think it would have been much wiser if you had said. At Edinburgh, and after dinner, I make no doubt of it, you said, "*I had to educate our party.*" Revising your proof-sheets, you thought it more prudent and modest to say, "*We had to educate our party.*" In your Cabinet in Downing Street, after more than four months' deliberation, the phrase exhales into "*The Tory party had been educated for seven years.*" First, it was, "*I educated the party*"; then it was, "*We educated the party*"; and, finally, "*The party had been educated.*" This is a pretty grammatical illustration of the development of the indefinite; the good, stout first person singular melting into the plural, and at last evaporating into the impersonal and indefinite. "*I educated the party,*"—" *We educated the party,*"—" *The party was educated.*" It is a pity that the poverty of the English Language did not supply you,—our accomplished and literary PREMIER,—with the dual number and the middle voice, that the two other stages of the process of Tory education might have been indicated:—We two; that is, I and my Lord DERBY, educated the party;



and the Tory party educated themselves. In a former letter, in my sincere congratulations to you, on your elevation to the Premiership, I suggested, though very gently, my misgivings as to one part of your character; and though I admitted that you had hitherto mastered your cleverness, I almost hinted that your cleverness might possibly, on some occasion, master you. My first forebodings have been fulfilled much sooner than I expected. Unless you are very much on your guard against this fatal gift of sharpness, you will find that your astuteness has been already too much for you. Verbal artifice and literary sophistry have their uses, and you have often wielded these dangerous weapons with skill and success; but you should know that a Prime Minister, and a professor of word-fence, require different qualities. My fears about you resolve themselves into an apprehension that you are relapsing into your old manner, just when it is most necessary for you to forget all about it. Earl RUSSELL did a very silly and snarling thing, when he recurred to your Edinburgh speech at all. To twit you,—our great literary *Premier*,—with an expression which was not only very pardonable, but very true, was really only to play second to *Punch*. For months and months all of us had been, in our several ways, laughing at, or with you educating your party; and at last Mr. TENNIEL drew you as the new *Head Master* receiving the honorary birch. This was all good fun, intelligible to the meanest comprehension, and to everybody of ordinary good-nature,—and, therefore, not to Earl RUSSELL. So he made a mountain of a mole-hill, and was so carried away with rage and discomfiture as to swear and curse snapishly at what everybody else only chuckled at. Had you thoroughly known, I do not say yourself, but the dignity which you had won, you would either have treated the matter with contempt, or, in your proper place in Parliament, would have vindicated yourself. As it is, the old principle is too strong for you; the flesh of “SIDONIA” and “CONINGSBY” could not resist the temptation,—noble talk,—about “an august assembly.” Hence this very small, but very *significant* and *characteristic* *fiasco*. The young man’s cat-wife, in the fable, would have done well on her marriage night to have forgotten her old love for mice; and for at least your first week in Downing Street, you,—the QUEEN’S OWN PRIME MINISTER,—might have done better had you not fallen back on the smallest tricks of a gentleman of the Press.

Your recent vindictory letter to the London journals, which I intend to introduce into this epistle, has not escaped criticism abroad as well as at home. It has elicited the following observations from the *Opinion Nationale*:—“We do not clearly understand Mr. Disraeli’s point. Does he mean to deny that the ‘education’ of his party was accomplished by himself? Does he mean to say it was effected by the force of events? But, in that case, what becomes of the reputation he has hitherto enjoyed, of having been the only man astute enough to restore his party to power? There is another consideration which his letter leaves intact. The Tory party, up to the last moment, set its face against Reform, and represented it as useless and dangerous. We are, therefore, driven to regard the conduct of the Tories of 1867 as the result of a sudden illumination, rather than of a gradual education. Mr. Disraeli would certainly have been wiser had he held his tongue.”

Most people have heard of the appropriate joke which *Punch* once applied to Lord JOHN RUSSELL and his colleagues, when they were not supposed to be very energetic. There were two schoolboys and their



master. "What are you doing, John?"—asked the pedagogue. "Nothing, Sir," replied John. "And you, Sir?"—continued the master to the other boy. "Helping John, Sir." "What is your policy?"—asks the British public of you, our new PRIME MINISTER. "Do you think that Ireland ought to be governed in accordance with the wishes of the large majority of the Irish people, and that arrangements alien to the bulk of the natives of the soil should be set aside?" The House of the Common men was crowded on the evening of the 5th current, as I have already observed, to hear your response. "It is not at all necessary to answer the question," was your virtual reply, as our new First Lord of the Treasury. "My policy is well known: my policy is the same as Lord DERBY'S," are your replies. "But what was Lord DERBY'S policy?"—ask members of Parliament, and the public out of doors, still more bewildered than before. It is considered very doubtful whether Lord DERBY ever had a policy. Household Suffrage has, indeed, become a great fact. At Edinburgh, you assured the Scotch Tories that you had been steadily educating the party for this Franchise during the last six or seven years. You spoke of yourself as the great educator; your speech was all about yourself. "I"—that is yourself—had done it all. Lord DERRY'S policy was defined by Lord RUSSELL, in the House of the Common men, to be that of openly professing to say one thing, and meaning another. "We know," observed Lord RUSSELL, "that, for three years, the Government has been carried on upon the principle, that, having declared against any reduction whatever in the Franchise, the Ministers of the Crown, while they were persuading people to follow them in that course, meant all the time to make a larger reduction in the Franchise than was proposed by the Liberal party. The consequence was a course of deception which has been called by another name, but which must, I think, prevent any reliance upon a Government which openly avows that it does not mean what it says, but professes one thing and means another." In this new political combat, Lord RUSSELL deserves the credit of having drawn the first blood, in the form of a letter\* to the newspapers from you, our new PRIME MINISTER. Lord RUSSELL has struck so heavily, that you had to rush forward to supply the deficiencies of your colleagues in the other House. Since Lord MALMESBURY and the Duke of MARLBOROUGH did not satisfactorily answer Lord RUSSELL, you have adopted the course of writing to the morning journals the letter which appears below as a

\* TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TIMES."

SIR,—Lord RUSSELL observed last night, in the House of Lords, that I "boasted at Edinburgh that, while during seven years I opposed a reduction of the Borough Franchise, I had been all that time educating my party, with the view of bringing about a much greater reduction of the Franchise than that which my opponents had proposed." As a general rule, I never notice misrepresentations of what I may have said; but, as this charge against me was made in an august assembly, and by a late first Minister of the Crown, I will not refrain from observing that the charge has no foundation. Nothing of the kind was said by me at Edinburgh. I said there, that the Tory party, after the failure of their Bill of 1859, had been educated for seven years on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, and during that interval had arrived at five conclusions, which, with their authority, I had at various times announced, viz.:—1. That the measure should be complete. 2. That the representation of no place should be entirely abrogated. 3. That there must be a real Boundary Commission. 4. That the County representation should be considerably increased. 5. That the Borough Franchise should be established on the principle of rating;—and that these five points were accomplished in the Act of 1867. This is what I said at Edinburgh; and it is true.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, B. DISRAELI.

Downing Street, March 6, 1868.



foot-note, and to which I have already adverted. The course you have taken is very unusual. If a Minister finds himself attacked in such a manner in one House of Parliament that he feels it incumbent upon him to make some reply, the rule is for him to entrust that duty to one of his colleagues in the House where his assailant is, or for himself to take in the House where he sits, some opportunity of indirectly referring to what has been said in another place, or what may have appeared in the newspapers as having been said in another place. You, however, found that the charge against you has been made in an "august assembly," and by "a late First Minister of the Crown;" and being now First Minister of the Crown,—to the great annoyance of many blue-blooded noodles,—you address a letter to the newspapers, in answer to Lord RUSSELL's attack. This course is, probably, not the most dignified. It is almost your first public act as our new PRIME MINISTER on commencing your Administration. There is something sensational about it, and it may be doubted whether it in any respect improves your position. Every person who takes an interest in British politics, has read the report of what you said at the Edinburgh banquet. The whole speech was in the most triumphant tone. The Tories were the real Liberals. They had passed nearly all the good measures of this century. They were eminently the Reformers. Household Suffrage was the old and popular Franchise of the country; and you had been educating your party to adopt it, while opposing the Bill of the late Government, and proposing guarantees which were tacitly acknowledged to be quite illusory. This, at least, was what you were understood to have said. The speech was commented on at the time by every prominent organ of public opinion, the Tory journals only treating this reference to yourself as the educator of the party for Household Suffrage somewhat shyly. They did not like it, and passed it over without any remark. So extraordinary did your statements appear, and so inaccurate and unfair was your version of the recent Reform struggle, that on the day when the Parliament met before Christmas, Mr. GLADSTONE stated that he had intended calling the attention of the House of the Common men to some of your recent assertions, but that he would not do so while Mrs. Disraeli was supposed to be at the crisis of a very serious illness. You now, however, assure the public that all you said at Edinburgh was that the education of the Tories for seven years only meant that they should insist upon a complete measure, a real Boundary Commission, the increase of the County representation, the establishment of a rating Franchise in Boroughs, and the preservation of all enfranchised places from entire abolition. Had these five points, which you said were accomplished, been nakedly stated at Edinburgh, they certainly would not have excited much enthusiasm on the part of the audience, or been received with surprise and amusement everywhere by those who read the reports of the speech. If politicians accept your version of what you meant, it may be considered another proof that you and any Cabinet of which you are the leading Minister, cannot but, as Lord RUSSELL said, have the unfortunate propensity of saying one thing and meaning another. Lord RUSSELL's criticism, however small and snappish, is justified even by the explanatory letter which he has called forth. With regard to your five points themselves, it will be seen that they contain nothing about a great reduction of the Franchise; nothing about the great popular Suffrage, according to the old Constitution of the country. An abstract preference for a rating



over a rental Franchise really means nothing. To maintain, also, that any measure proposed or accepted by the Tories "should be complete," is ridiculous, when it is almost universally acknowledged that the redistribution scheme is not at all complete, and that it will have to be extended before any satisfactory settlement of this Reform question can be accomplished. The maintenance of the point, "that the representation of no place should be entirely abrogated," may, indeed, be called Conservative, because it is really opposed to any adequate representation of the great commercial centers, according to their wealth and their population. Had this "point" been carried out in the Reform Act of 1832, the Nation should still have had Old Sarum. The Liberals must see how the maintenance of such a principle in the Irish Reform Bill will please the Irish Tories, who have been unanimously declaring that the only Reform in the representation Ireland requires, is, the increase in the number of the representatives in Ulster, at the expense of Munster and Connaught. You are, however, bound to act on the same principle in Ireland that you have applied to England. We are, indeed, to have an Irish Reform Bill, and "the measure, in its general character, will follow the principles already sanctioned in this House." Such are your words of last evening. Do they require any explanation? We shall have to wait for the "details" of the measure before deciding on the merits of the new Bill giving Household Suffrage to Ireland. You have taught us that a principle of Reform is nothing without the details. But the letter to the newspapers, in reply to Lord RUSSELL, is symptomatic of uneasiness. In both Houses of Parliament there is a disposition to speak unpleasant truths, and to watch narrowly your actions. You seek still to make use of Lord DERBY: the Numa of the Tories would wish to be considered in constant consultation with "the Rupert of debate," as his nymph Egeria. The deception, however, cannot be successfully maintained. You must depend upon yourself; and the task is already one of considerable difficulty. You find yourself jealously watched. You have not only the House of the Common men to deal with, but the entire Nation; and your Parliamentary manœuvring, which has been somewhat dexterous, will not satisfy the British public.

*What do you now, as a literary gentleman and as a sensible man, really think of the Reports of "The Boundaries Commission," and of "The Schools' Inquiry Commission"?—is a question which I must propose for your consideration before concluding the present letter.*

Independently of political considerations, great interest attaches to the Report of the Boundaries Commission. It is a valuable contribution to our topographical knowledge in that particular which has the greatest social importance,—the distribution of population in England and Wales. Within the memory of the present generation, new centers of industry and active life have been organized in various parts of the country; the great towns have outgrown their former limits; and the surging tide of humanity has overflowed its ancient boundaries. The enormous suburbs which have been called into existence in the neighborhood of London would elsewhere be considered great cities. The like growth and progress have taken place in nearly every considerable town of the Queendom; and, therefore, supposing that we maintain the artificial distinction between Borough and County representation, to revise the ancient lines of demarcation becomes absolutely necessary. Furthermore, the necessity is chronic; for any settlement



effected now, will not correctly represent topographical facts thirty or fifty years hence. None of our large towns are yet finished ; and each of them will probably increase as rapidly in the time of our sons as in our own. The Reform Act of 1867 empowered the Commissioners to inquire respecting the propriety of extending the old Boroughs, but not of contracting them. Last Session, Mr. BRIGHT urged strenuously, but in vain, that there should be a power of recommending the reduction, as well as the enlargement, of areas ; and, if his wise counsel had prevailed, the Report would not contain, as it does, references to anomalies, which, though utterly indefensible, the Commissioners are not authorized to amend. One of the most striking lessons of the Report is this, that it renders the absurdities and irregularities of the late Reform Act more conspicuous than ever. Instead of being a settlement, that ill-drawn measure has rendered further changes inevitable, by aggravating several of the former anomalies of the representative system. It is impossible that the present "settlement" can subsist for long. The British people are tolerant of old-established anomalies ; antiquity reconciles them to much that has gradually become irregular and grotesque in the Constitution ; but there is no ground for exercising a like indulgence with reference to the fantastic innovations of yesterday. The value of the Boundaries Report is to be found rather in what it suggests than in what it expresses. It may be safely assumed that the Commissioners have done their work as well as it could be done ; but they disclose in almost every page the fact, that our whole representative system is in a state of transition. The change recommended in the Blue Book may stave off troubles for a while. The present House of the Common men is certainly not the body from which we should expect a masterly, comprehensive treatment of this or any other abstruse subject requiring statesmanship of a high order. The policy now in vogue is that of temporary expedients, and every measure brought into the existing Parliament is tolerably sure to be a sort of political jury-mast. Our representative system, indeed, is full of utterly indefensible inequalities and grievances, to which it is impossible that the Nation can submit ; and if prudent evasion may render it possible to escape a little longer the necessity of grappling with the anomalies, no stronger evidence can be wanted than the Report of the Boundary Commission, to demonstrate that the Reform Act of 1867 was merely the beginning of Parliamentary Reform.

Mr. FRAZER, the Commissioner appointed to inquire into the employment of women and children in agricultural labor, told the recent meeting of the "Central Chamber of Agriculture" to which I have already alluded in a former letter,—that he had visited Norfolk, Essex, Suffolk, and Gloucestershire. He found boys eleven years of age sometimes employed for fourteen hours a day,—and, of course, destitute of education. One-third of the rural schools he found efficient, another third merely useful,—by which, I must suppose, he means rather better than nothing,—and the remainder, schools only in name. The "real obstacle to education," he said, "was the poverty of the agricultural laborer." He also adverted to the curious fact of the great inequality of wages in different counties,—the Northumberland laborer earning 18s a week, and the Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and Gloucestershire laborer only 9s. Mr. GEORGE ANDREWS,—a wiseacre from the Somersetshire Chamber,—saw no difficulty in explaining this fact upon the principle of supply and demand. This gentleman, like many



others, has got hold of words without the corresponding ideas. The laws of supply and demand tend to the equalization of wages, prices, and profits ; and when wages, or profits, or prices remain very unequal in districts not far apart, some special causes must operate to prevent the natural level being reached. Agricultural laborers were, for centuries after their nominal emancipation, treated as serfs. They were fixed to the soil on which they were born by the indirect action of law, such as that of settlement, and the state of mental stagnation kept up in rural districts by the influence of squirearchy was unfavorable to the development of anything like enterprise and locomotion. Sir G. JENKINSON remarked, that, where wages were low, the labor was comparatively valueless,—or, in addition to money payments, there were payments in kind. Lieutenant-Colonel BRISE (Essex Chamber) agreed that it was inexpedient that children under ten years of age should be employed, but he feared the reduction that would take place in the resources of the parents, if their children were not allowed to work before that age. Bigotry and cant were represented at this gathering by Mr. PELL (Chairman of the Council of last year), who was against a rate in aid, because it would bring with it a “conscience clause,”—that is to say, a clause which precludes the enforcement of sectarian teaching,—the only kind of teaching fanaticism approves. Now, if you look to the facts,—not new, but very striking,—brought out in this discussion, you shall see how thoroughly Toryism must be defeated before there can be any possibility of emancipating the agricultural population. The present system of land-owning, with a complete divorcement of the actual cultivator from proprietorship in the soil, makes the peasantry so poor that they cannot afford to give up the wretched earnings of little children under ten years of age,—earnings obtained at the cost of dwarfing their mental faculties, and often injuring their physical constitutions for life. If the rural population had Votes, and the Ballot, the Nation would soon see active measures in operation for their improvement ;—without such aids, they will languish in comparative misery, though some little may be done for their good. Self-satisfied and wealthy respectabilities are not at all shocked by such facts as Mr. FRAZER details, but the degradation of a rural population is a portion of feudalism. It is founded upon man’s iniquities, not upon Nature’s laws ; and Democracy must march on towards its peaceful victories, and emancipate the peasantry, in spite of all that Toryism, and its close relation, Whiggism, can do. Passing from the education of the poor to that of the richer classes, I find the Oxford Heads of Houses appealing to the ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY to save them from Liberal legislation, as proposed by Mr. GOSCHEN and Mr. COLERIDGE. They want to keep the old Universities as sectarian as the times will permit. They set up a howl of pious horror at the *Idea* of Dissenters of any kind becoming members of the governing body. The plain tendency of Liberalism, as applied to ecclesiastical matters, is to increase the efficiency of the Church as a religious institution, and to prevent its being made a tool of for re-actionary politics. Let the Church swallow up Dissent as fast as it can, by being better than Dissent ; but when theological tests are employed, or sought to be maintained, for the purpose of giving a sectarian and narrow character to what ought to be great National Schools of Learning, the Nation should see Toryism in one of its most malignant, and, let me trust, in one of its most perishable forms. Freedom of education is an essential part of political liberty. As the people ad-



vance in extensions of popular power, the Nation ought also to advance in the instruction of the people, and no difference of opinion on matters purely theological ought to stand in the way of diffusing accurate knowledge as widely as we can. If Reformers pass from the Education Question to that of Pauperism and Local Expenditure, they find themselves again in a region where Toryism presents itself as an enemy to be fought and vanquished, and where they may be sure the Tory party will agree to nothing satisfactory except under compulsion. Mr. GOSCHEN has called National attention to the fact that improvements demanded in London for the diminution of pauperism cannot be made under the present system of taxation. The rates in large parishes are enormous, and the Metropolitan Board has severely increased a pressure previously too great. Now, Tory politicians may go some way on the road towards equalization of Poor's Rates, but they will not tax the rich in their fair proportion for improvements made chiefly for their benefit, nor will they agree to give the metropolis the benefit of one or more real and effective Corporations for local management. They have thrown all the great parishes into confusion by their ratepaying clause in the Reform Bill, and this may operate beneficially by stimulating attention to the whole question of local burdens. If Ignorance and Pauperism are to be effectually assailed, local expenditure must be largely increased; and Reformers need not say this cannot be afforded while Imperial taxation remains so high. Local taxation is a very serious burden upon all but the rich, and to ask struggling tradesmen to pay more, without relieving them in other directions, would be to make an impracticable as well as an unfair demand.

Unless a people be educated, good government becomes impossible; and, when they become educated, they will be satisfied with nothing less than the best government which their institutions permit, and that their intelligence and wisdom can devise. These are the barest of truisms, and have been repeated over and over again until they have lost all their force, and people acquiesce in them as matters which may concern their neighbors, but certainly not themselves. It is this very apathy—this easy concurrence in all and every plan proposed for popular Education—that, in effect, renders progress and legislation on the subject difficult. It by no means follows, because everybody is of one mind upon the desirability of a certain end, that the end desired will be attained. Eager, active, enthusiastic men are rendered more earnest by a stubborn opposition: but the wet blanket of cold, apathetic sympathy is more than they can bear. They are clogged by it; not a limb can they move; and the energies that should be applied to carry a measure into effect are wasted in urging forward their kind but heavy-breeched friends, who sum up all the virtues of political life in resting and being thankful. The only formidable enemies of popular Education are its friends. But if there is a difficulty,—and I grant it is no easy task,—to draw up any popular scheme of Education that shall satisfy lukewarm supporters, ardent friends, and the few fossil, old-world enemies that still linger among us, there ought to be no difficulty in immediately utilizing the resources that are already at hand. From the Report of the Schools' Inquiry Commission, it seems that the total net income applicable from endowments to educational purposes is £277,000, and that the number of scholars is nearly 40,000. Excluding the scholars and the income of the nine great public schools (Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Westminster, Shrewsbury, Winchester, Char-



ter-House, Merchant-Tailors, and St. Paul's), there are £212,000 divided among 820 schools and 36,874 boys, of whom 9,279 are boarders and 27,595 day scholars. Now, let you, as Prime Minister of Britain, and lately a gentleman of the Press, see what is done with this money. At Bosworth, where the school has an income of £792 a year, the head-master taught three boarders, and no others, the under-master attending "only when he chose." At Thame, with an income of £300, there were two masters and one boy in the school. This is nearly as bad as the story that used to be told of the Coggeshall Volunteers,—ten officers to two privates, whom they drilled to death. At Butterwick, with £312, there were two boys learning the declensions; Humbershire, with £737, had five or six; and Bosworth (I presume a different place from that mentioned above) had £1,120 a year, with three boys learning grammar. At Botesdale, there were six pupils, whom the master sent to a private school at his own expense, and lived in the school-house, without doing any work whatever. This had gone on for forty years. A similar arrangement exists at Coxwold; and at Snareston, the master "chiefly occupied himself in farming eight acres of the school land." So far, however, there was some pretext of teaching, but in other places there was not even this decent hypocrisy. At Whitgift's Hospital, Croydon, not a single pupil had attended the school during the thirty and odd years that the late master (who died last year) held the appointment. In two schools visited by the Commissioners, the masters were too deaf to hear the lessons; in another, he was helpless from paralysis; and, in many instances, the masters held appointments or filled offices which prevented their giving due time to the discharge of their proper duties. It would be curious to know how many of these masters were clergymen; and certainly the recommendation of the Report as to "a wiser choice of masters," and that they "ought not to be limited to clergymen," is in many ways significant. Coming nearer your home, you will find mismanagement and peculation very abundant. Out of twenty-seven schools belonging to City Companies, only ten or twelve "may be said to be really useful," the remainder being "badly managed." The revenues of Christ's Hospital amount to £50,000, out of which £48,000 are spent on education; but,—With what result? Mr. FEARON says that boys are often obliged to go to other schools after leaving the Hospital, before they are fit to enter business. "It is difficult," adds the Commission, "to conceive a more damning fact to the administration of a great school, with such advantages as are enjoyed by Christ's Hospital." Dulwich College receives £17,000, and spends only £3,000 on education. The opportunity of thoroughly reforming this great charity was thrown away a few years ago by the mismanagement of certain of the theatrical profession who took the matter in hand, and who thought more of themselves than of the public. Now, these are matters which immediately concern the working classes and the small shopkeepers, and others immediately above them, who are the great patrons of those "classical and commercial academies," which, according to MATTHEW ARNOLD, "have succeeded in turning out the most uncultivated middle class in Europe." Before any scheme is carried for compulsory, or even voluntary rating, measures should be taken for effectually reforming the abuses I have pointed out, and of utilizing to the utmost the liberal gifts of past generations. Too long the children of the poor have been defrauded of their rights. What shall you do in this grave



matter?—is a question which should be constantly repeated throughout the Nation.

I am, dear Sir, yours very respectfully, an active promoter of the progress of Political Science,—and, like yourself, not at all relying on either the assumptions or nicknames of ancestors for my success in life,

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER VII.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
March 18th, 1868.

The Right Hon. B. DISRAELI, Prime  
Minister of Britain.

DEAR SIR,—The long and justly demanded “REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE OF SCOTLAND BILL” which had been introduced and read the first time upon the 17th of February last, and upon which followed some important discussion, to which I will immediately advert, was read a second time without any special remarks, upon the evening of the 9th current. On a second reading it is only the principle of a Bill that is supposed to be at issue, and there are no principles at issue in the Scotch Reform Bill. Household Suffrage in the Boroughs, £12 rating occupation Franchise in the Counties, and a £5 property qualification, are proposals which are accepted at present by every politician of every party. No one objects to them, and no one has to defend them. It is the details of the Bill which alone elicit feeling and provoke remark, and the details of the Bill are not part of the Government measure. Nothing can exceed the latitude which the Government pretends to allow in settling the only portions of the Bill which are of the slightest interest. The Scotch bitterly object to the scheme of redistribution proposed. The Government professes its complete indifference. Whatever scheme, therefore, the Scotch may like they can have. When introduced the Bill was propounded by the Lord Advocate in a very unadorned but clear manner. The Franchise portion of it was soon dismissed, with a statement that both in Boroughs and Counties the qualification would be the same as that in England; namely, Household Suffrage in the former and £12 occupation in the latter case, with personal payment of rates. It was noticeable that it is not thought necessary to enact a Lodger Franchise for Scotland. The subject of distribution of Seats was more elaborated, but in the event it came to this, that Scotland is now offered seven more representative members, who are to be added to the existing members of the House! This proposition evoked the only interruption to the perfect silence which had prevailed, and that came in the shape of a doubtful-sounding cheer from the Scottish members, which received its interpretation afterwards when it was so generally laid down that they wanted more members for Scotland, but not from the source indicated in the Bill. An explanation of this measure was thus listened to with respectful attention, but without eagerness, and it called forth little more than a spirited protest against one of the main points. The Lord Advocate expounded the chief provisions of a Bill which differs but slightly from that laid on the table last session. The Suffrage, both in Borough and County, is to be on the English pattern. In the Boroughs, all who are rated to the poor and who pay their rates are to



have a Vote, and due precautions will be taken to prevent the improper omission of names from the register. Since the distinction between Householders and Lodgers does not prevail in Scotland, the measure contains no clause specifically establishing a Lodger Franchise; but Mr. GORDON explained that the Government were ready to insert a declaratory clause should it be considered advisable. In the Counties, the ownership Franchise will be £5 clear yearly value, and the occupation Franchise will be £12 rated value, including all dwelling-places between £12 and £50. So far, the Lord Advocate encountered neither assent nor dissent on the part of his audience. The House of the Common men heard him with a listless quietude, and only roused up a little when he entered upon the ticklish subject of redistribution—the crucial section of the Bill. It has long been well known that the present Government had adopted the views of Lord RUSSELL's Administration, and had concurred in the propriety of adding seven Seats to the representation of Scotland. Whence can those Seats be obtained? The present Cabinet—differing in that respect from Lord RUSSELL's—proposes to overcome the difficulty by originating new constituencies, and augmenting the number of the House of the Common men to 665. The distribution of the seven Seats was next explained. Two members are to be given to the four universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrew's. One additional member is allotted to the Counties of Lanark, Ayr, and Aberdeen. Glasgow is also to receive another Seat. But, following the English precedent, the Government is to give the electors of Glasgow only two votes; in other words, the representation of minorities is to be imported into Scotland. The House of the Common men, which had shown symptoms of dissent when the proposal to increase the total number of members was announced, objected more loudly when the Lord Advocate quietly gave the third member to the minority. But the dissatisfaction was even louder as he explained that the seventh Seat would be conceded to a composite constituency, made up of small towns; and the note of dissent reached a climax when he proposed to add Hawick and Galashiels to the Haddington Boroughs, and Alloa to Stirling. Mr. BAXTER at once took ground against the scheme, describing the plan of distribution as far worse than had been anticipated. Passing by that part of the Bill, however, he energetically denounced the proposal to increase the number of members in a House which was already too large. His protest, delivered with spirit, was warmly applauded. He declared that the Scotch people would prefer to postpone their claim to additional representatives until the Reformed Parliament should assemble, rather than pay the heavy price demanded by the Government. You spoke for a considerable time in favor of the scheme, using the arguments with which you have made the House of Common men familiar on other occasions; but though, as a matter of course, the Bill was read a second time, your words had little effect on the scanty audience, which was composed almost entirely of Scotch members. As for Mr. BAXTER's suggestion, that the Bill should be delayed until it could be dealt with by the next Parliament, rather than passed in its present form, such an expedient is unnecessary; since seven Seats can be obtained, either by disfranchising the English Borough villages whose population is under 5,000, or by taking one member from all Boroughs with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants. Plainly, the contest over the Scotch Reform Bill will be waged, first, on the



question of increasing the numbers of the House, or abolishing the English village constituencies ; and next, upon the plan of distributing the Seats ; for on this point the Ministerial scheme is open to the gravest objections. The main object, however, is to frustrate the unwise proposal to alter the figure 658, at least so far as any augmentation is concerned ; and on that subject Mr. BAXTER's remarks tend to show that the Scotch Liberals, at least, will stand by sound constitutional principle. Any injustice on the part of the existing Parliament could, it is true, be very promptly and easily rectified in a reformed Parliament ; and Tories especially should be too prudent to set the hazardous example of tampering with the existing number of the House of the Common men.

The main feature in the Scotch Reform Bill is, of course, the reduction of the Franchise, and in all essential points the Bill on this head follows the precedent of the English Act of last Session. A rating Household Suffrage in Boroughs, and a £12 rating qualification in Counties, are its leading features. One or two Scotch members feebly raised the familiar objection to what used at one time to be called the principle or mode of making the personal payment of rates essential. These objections are excellent objections in themselves. No one now affects to think that the payment of rates carries any *principle* of Political Science with it, and if the *rating clauses* of the English Act give any annoyance to electors, or interfere in any serious way with the social arrangements of the inhabitants of Boroughs, they may be swept away by a new Parliament. But it is not to be supposed that the battle of last Session is to be fought over again this Session for the sake of extending justice to Scotland. No one on the South side of the Tweed pretends to feel any great interest in the Scotch Reform Bill. Rating clauses have been thought,—by the majority of those pretending to represent the Nation,—good enough for England, and so they must do, I suspect, for the moment, for Scotland also. Theoretically, it certainly seems absurd to fabricate an artificial impediment to the Franchise which every politician must know to be fruitful of petty annoyances, and which cannot exist for more than a very short time. But if the Scotch people and their members wish for a Reform Bill this Session, they will have to be content for the present with what the existing House of the Common men will give them, and it certainly will not give them what it refused to England. Whether the people of Scotland shall have a Reform Bill or not this Session is really of very little importance, for they know they can always have one whenever they are inclined to put themselves on the same footing with the English people. They may, if they please, wait until the rating clauses are abolished in England, and probably their patience would not be very severely tried. In a calm phlegmatic way, however, the people of Scotland seem to wish for a Reform Bill, and they are assured by all their representatives that they are far more fit for the exercise of political power than the English people are. If so, they must have their Reform Bill by all means, and the measure meted to England last year must be meted out to them without any grudging this year. All this is so very obvious, that the whole discussion turned on what you termed the minor details of the Bill. There was nothing else to discuss ; and as the Scotch members could scarcely receive a Scotch Reform Bill in perfect silence, they naturally talked about the portions of the Bill which really afforded matter for debate. And



even on what, comparatively speaking, may be termed trivial points, there is, when the interests of individuals and localities are affected, a great deal to say. The Scotch people through their representatives assert that they are entitled to more members than they have at present. Twenty-five was the figure at which they first put their proper increase, but their claims have now dwindled down to fifteen. The Government offers them seven, and out of this offer arise the two questions, whether these additional seven Seats are to be gained by increasing the members of the House of the Common men, or by disfranchising some small English Boroughs; and, secondly, whether the Government has hit on the right scheme of distributing these seven Seats when the mode of their origination has been decided. You say that you consider it impossible to persuade English members to let the seven Seats be taken from England and given to Scotland. So the number of the members of the House of the Common men must be increased, or the Scotch will practically fail to get any more representatives. Mr. GLADSTONE expressed a contrary opinion, and pronounced it to be far preferable that the requisite number of Seats should be taken from English Boroughs. It was with something of a sneer that Mr. GLADSTONE's opinion was spoken of. What is meant by this? Mr. GLADSTONE is one of the foremost, if not the foremost, man in English public life, and he represents a very important constituency. Why should he not be at liberty to visit the chief towns of the County division which he represents; and why should he not say, if he pleases, that it is better not to increase the unwieldy numbers of the House of the Common men, but to satisfy Scotland at the expense of the tiny decaying Boroughs of Southern England? The very people who join in the sneers at Mr. GLADSTONE are the first to oppose any dissent from their own crotchets. The Government has proposed that seven shall be the number. It does not appear to you as a specially good or desirable number. It is not calculated with reference to population, or wealth, or anything in particular. It was only chosen because it happened to be the number which Mr. GLADSTONE had chosen; and the present Government adopted it, just as you adopted his Budgets in block,—because he is understood to be clever at figures. But if he had any cause for choosing it, you had none; and the Scotch can take any other figure in moderation which they set their fancies on. All they have to do is to fix on a number, stick to it, and get the House of the Common men to sanction it.

There is no greater spectacle in the world than the British House of the Common men; and when the great giants of debate put forth their powers the mind must be very dull indeed that does not respond to the sound of battle. No deliberative assembly except the House of the Common men can boast of four orators equal to GLADSTONE, DISRAELI, BRIGHT and LOWE. But even when the four great orators do not speak there is sufficient about the House to interest the people who have waited so patiently to get into the gallery. Scotland, at the time of the union, only paid one fortieth of the taxation, and now she is so rich and so well-to-do as to pay a fifth, and she ought to have at least 25 new members; whilst the Irish members ought to be reduced to 72. Ireland pays £6,000,000 and receives back £2,740,000; whilst Scotland pays £8,400,000 and receives back only £262,000. Mr. SMOLLETT had a very doleful account to give of Glasgow, where the constituency will be increased to 30,000 or 40,000 electors of a lower class than



those who now hold the Suffrage. The representation would be brought down to one uniform hue—this Liberal Blue above and the Democratic Red below, but still Mr. SMOLLETT agreed to support the bill as an inevitable necessity. Mr. SMOLLETT believes that the Bill will increase bribery. Mr. McLAREN brought to the debate the curious fact that the income tax of Edinburgh exceeds the income tax of Birmingham, and, except London, Liverpool, and Bristol, that the Customs duty paid at the port of Leith exceeds the amount at any port in the United Kingdom. So Mr. McLAREN stood up for more members, as did also Mr. McLAGAN, Colonel SYKES, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. MONCRIEFF, to whom Sir JAMES FERGUSON gave a reply that the Government might be found “squeezable” in committee, whereupon Mr. CRUM EWING took up the cue, and Mr. LAING defended the Government from the “moderate” point of view, and urged that Scotland should be content with ten additional members; but Mr. ELLICE, speaking with a decision most unusual, contradicted Mr. LAING as to the opinions of the Scotch people, and Mr. ELLICE refused to accept any number of members encumbered as the Bill was with rating clauses.

I am no Pythagorean to maintain the mystic sanctity of numbers; and it would puzzle my exegetical friend Dr. CUMMING himself to get much in that way out of the “six hundred and fifty-eight which stands at present as the fixed total of the British House of the Common men. But it is time to tell you very plainly and positively, that your scheme for satisfying the claims of Scotland by adding to the muster-roll of the Representative Chamber cannot and must not be accepted. Emphatically, it will not do; and I say this with no wish to put stones under the wheel of your Scotch Reform Bill. The true Liberals are willing and anxious to see you carry a measure, and so to square the matter up before the new Parliament is convened; for it would be in the highest degree inconvenient to have that Parliament re-opening the vexed questions of Seats and Suffrages, when it ought to get to other business of a sufficiently pressing nature. I know, too, that you have your work cut out for you, in regard to satisfying the Scottish representatives, who are naturally thinking more about squeezing you for new members than about your Parliamentary and Ministerial difficulties, or the immediate interests of representative Government. But there are better ways than that which you have chosen; and you must discover them yourself, or else accept suggestions from non-official advisers. Reformers must take a leaf out of your own book, and turn determined Tories upon this most important point. I freely grant that there is nothing in the eternal fitness of things to make six hundred and fifty-eight a constitutional *quantum*; while six hundred and sixty-five, as you propose, or six hundred and sixty-eight, as Mr. LAING asks, would ruin politics arithmetically. The House has grown from its ancient strength of six score burgesses to the present dimensions by gradual increments; and, on abstract grounds, there is no real cause or ground why it should not go on growing. But, practically, such a resource was brought to an end at the Union, and I denounce its revival as a most pernicious makeshift, which must be either abandoned at once by its proposer, or strenuously resisted with all the force which can be marshalled. An increase would make a most fatal precedent, and disturb the silent understanding of many years. We have stopped at the present figure ever since the Irish Parliament was amalgamated with the English; but—Where are we to stop if, to save the rotten Boroughs



of England, and throw a sop to the Scotch representatives, you are permitted to set the example of adding to the House? New Boroughs will spring up, new Reform Bills will be proposed; and,—How is the demand for accommodation in the Chamber to be met either by Ministers or upholsterers? We cannot stop at an increase of seven or ten, but we can stop at the number now consecrated by long tradition, the more firmly since that number is far too large already. It would be a positive madness, a willful paltering with the stability of our system, to rescue the rotten Boroughs by such a device as that proposed by you. Had it been suggested by Lord RUSSELL, you would certainly have been aware of that fact, and you must know that, if you maintain your intention, you will, at any hazard, be opposed by the Liberal party. In point of fact, the Parliament itself, in the famous words to which it once listened, might be impeached as a body which “has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished.” There ought to be a change made in its muster-roll; but that change should be one of decrease. Everybody knows that there is no room in the Chamber for the members. On any exciting night senators have to squat like Hottentots on the gangways, or pant and jostle at the doors, amid impatient shouts for order and decorum. A great division, instead of being characterized by dignity and quiet, is already a sight like a cattle-fair; and to hear an important debate our representatives must scramble for a place at prayers, and leave a card or a hat as their representative. With difficulty is a place preserved even for the best-known men. On a summer night “the smoke of the torment” of our thickly-packed legislators ascends as from a Tophet. And the inconvenience threatens to increase rather than diminish. A Parliament elected by Household Suffrage Voters will be more dependent on the goodwill of the electors than a Parliament elected under a Franchise which subjects many Boroughs to Soil-Lord control. The new members will, therefore, be more prone to use the floor of the House for addressing their constituents. With a fresh desire to make speeches, will come a greater regularity in the attendance, and the House will be more crowded than ever. Nor will that be the only new source of trouble. Not only will there be more talk, but there will be more to talk about. The increasing wealth of the country will raise up an host of financial and commercial subjects; the railway system awaits discussion and revision; local business is every year pressing with more weight; a crowd of great public questions will demand legislative settlement; and since the demands on the time of the House are thus growing in magnitude, it is essential to keep down the number of men that have the privilege of speaking. Equally necessary is it to take measures for rendering the House a place of business, and not a club or a lounge for idleness and leisure. But you would increase the present difficulty by setting a precedent which might render the size of the House unmanageable. And, by thus placing new obstacles in the way of business, you would furnish the members with new temptations to waste time in purposeless debate. It would be monstrous, then, to pack the bursting Chamber with another half-score, till the scene should become that of a Caucus or of a Stump-Convention, instead of the proudest and most powerful deliberative Council in the world. What ought to be done is not to add a single sitter to the list, but anxiously to reduce the number; and, while giving perfect justice to Scotland and Ireland, the national voice might sweep out of existence the wretched category of little Boroughs



which "cumber the ground." Of course this equitable plan finds small favor with rich Tory lords and squires ; but, if you add to the House of the Common men, the intense discomfort and paralysis of business will be the last straw upon the camel's back ; and, as sure as ever the new Parliament assembles, a resolute vote will clear the benches of the pocket-members, and the matter of Seats and Suffrages will be revived, whether or not it be convenient and safe. Here, then, is a point upon which the entire Liberal party must unite like one man, and declare that Scotland should have her fresh Seats at the cost of the marketable Boroughs, and not at the cost of the public welfare. Energetic action will be demanded from every man who means to be called "a Liberal" at the next election, and "a supporter of Mr. GLADSTONE." You are very ingenious, and may find a middle course, or a dozen middle courses, if you please ; but this course you shall not take, unless you should be master of the House of the Common men. It is mischievous and evil to the last degree—it will cause a most serious and unfortunate precedent, all the more because it has no manner of apology, except to stop the mouths of Scotch members, and save a set of little venal holes and corners, which tremble already to their fall, because of the Bribery Bill. As for Mr. LAING, the LORD of the Hebrew Records deliver the Nation from Mr. LAING and from Liberalism of the school of Wick. It was perfectly well shown by many mouths how he calumniated the opinion of Scotland on the evening of Monday the 9th current ; and Reformers are pretty well assured that Scotland is too intelligent and patriotic to be bribed with this stolen handful of seats, when, by insisting upon the equitable way of proceeding, it can purify the House of the Common men, diminish the notorious nuisance of its plethora of members, and get proper provision for itself. We want an "Overcrowding Act" for the Chamber ; and such would be the motion of Mr. BAXTER. At all events the Nation cannot and will not see disturbed, in a contrary direction, the line drawn now for so many years ; it would be a deadly specimen of false growth—an example of Ministerial tinkering with the Constitution to mend a patch in a session. Every good Liberal must oppose the idea to the death ; and commence a crusade against it from this moment till the hour when you shall forego it, or be forced to lay it aside.

THE SCOTCH REFORM BILL has thus raised a very curious point as to the numbers of English, Scotch, and Irish representatives in the House of the Common men. The Reform Act of 1832 settled the number of the House, and also the proportion at the time of each kingdom ; but modern circumstances have altered the respective positions of each country, and Scotland now calls for more members, on the very substantial bases of increase of population, wealth, and taxation. Comparatively there are parts of England which have made no corresponding progress, and there are also parts of England which have progressed even more than Scotland. Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire, and Staffordshire represent a manufacturing production, and of course population and taxation, unexampled in the world, and it is believed that these English Counties contribute more by machine power than all the labor by hand of the whole world. In your recent letter to the journals, you allege that the Tory party long ago resolved that no place in England should be wholly disfranchised, and there are some Tories in favor of such a determination ; but if it is once admitted, there is only



one remedy—to increase the number of members of the future House of the Common men. If the principle of increase is admitted, it is difficult to understand why the increase should be limited to seven members for Scotland, or that, as has been suggested, there should be a decrease in the representation of Ireland. A very hard nut it is to crack, either of increase or decrease, because the question of proportion is disturbed, and that once altered it is not so easy to find a new basis, unless all topographical and local distinctions are swept away, and the three Queendoms are regarded as one country. Scotchmen have nothing now to gain by the maintenance of a separate nationality, and even Irishmen will admit that there is more to be got out of the connexion with England than by the cultivation of a national feeling. If it could be done I should regard such an assimilation as one of the happiest effects of the new Reform Act. Scotchmen have hit a good mark when they ask for the removal of members from the small English Boroughs to Scotland, for Scotchmen are shrewd enough to see that a gain of seven members in the form of an addition to the House is not the same thing as a deduction of seven from England and an addition of seven to Scotland. They are not even content with seven, and they have raised the great question of redistribution in a form which will compel careful consideration so soon as the Irish Reform Bill is brought up. Now it may be admitted that there is nothing sacred in the number of 658, and that 665 is just as good a total as the first, but then comes the question might not 500 or even 300 be better still. The House is too large for a deliberative assembly, and the House itself is too small for the number of 665. It may be made larger, but the question is,—May not the contents be reduced? There is a good story told of a certain Chancellor of the Exchequer who was pestered by the complaints of a clerk that his desk was too low, and that he was obliged to stoop most inconveniently at his work. At last the great Minister came to see the desk and the clerk, and the clerk availed himself fully of the opportunity to exhibit his rounded shoulders in the act of writing. “Ah, I see,” said the statesman, “the desk is too low for you; we must get a shorter clerk.” The clerk had only thought of one remedy; the statesman thought of two, and Reformers may probably be pardoned if they venture to think that the present chamber of the Common men is too big, and that a smaller number of members may save us the outlay with which we are threatened in the modification of the splendid structure by the waters of the Thames. The number of members who wish to talk, and whose constituents expect to hear of them in the columns of the papers, are expected to say something which nobody cares to hear, and they say it at length. The modest member, who works like a mill-horse without reward in the work of the House which cannot be done in words, is taken no note of by his constituents. One of the very best members that ever sat in the House of the Common men, and whose name never appears in the journals of the day, but who sits daily with great industry, knowledge, and patience, superintending the work of unopposed Private Legislation, is threatened with opposition at the next election, because his constituents say he has done nothing; whereas the truth is that he has done more than any one member of the House, next to the Speaker and Chairman; but in his case without fee or reward, except the approbation of a good conscience, and the admiration of his fellow-members. This is the result of the incurable vice of talking, and of forgetfulness that the House,



except when it is in Committee, ought only to be the arena of struggles for men of the first order of intellectual rank, and if the dozen or twenty men of that rank had the debates all to themselves, there would be some pleasure in reading, and more in listening. The House is too large, and in a future Session, when men will attempt to address large constituencies from the floor of the House—when one eye will be kept on the Speaker, and the other askance at the hustings, the vice of talk will be doubled, and work will not be done. Whenever the question of redistribution is raised in full, and not by a side-wind, there will be very much to be said in favor of a reduction of the number of the House of the Common men by at least two hundred members.

In a manner, the evening of the 10th current was, indeed, the opening night of the Session in the House of the Common men ; and a considerable number of spectators and listeners gathered to witness, if possible, the development, from some quarter or the other, of a policy for Ireland. Even when the fortunes, or it may be the misfortunes, of an integral part of the empire are the imminent subject, the more common-place business of the Legislature must go on ; and so there were the usual notices of motions and questions, though not too many for the patience of the audience. Amongst the former was one from Mr. COGAN which referred to a burst of Protestant zeal from an Irish clergyman, the terms of which, as recited, were provocative of cordial laughter ; while Mr. OTWAY promised a practical attempt at the reduction of the Army Estimates, and Mr. CHILDERS intimated a like dealing with those of the Civil Service. An elaborate motion by Mr. TREVELYAN on purchase in the army stood first for consideration, and in postponing it he appeared almost as if he was about to proceed with it. However, he confined himself to his text, and deferred the discourse. All was then clear for Mr. MAGUIRE, who, having exhausted the primary subject of his unworthiness and inability to deal with the subject, set about to prove his thesis, that the condition of Ireland should be immediately considered by the House. If the attention and demeanor of the House of the Common men were to be taken as a test, it may truly be said that the speech was well sustained, the matter duly marshalled, and the illustrations, if sometimes strained, sufficiently apt and generally amusing when they were meant to be so. Of course, the hon. gentleman was now and then somewhat dramatic, or rather melodramatic ; but, probably, he had in his mind that he was probably to be followed by a professor of histrionics, and so adopted a rhetorical artifice to anticipate the manner of the rival mover of the amendment. Noticeable in this regard was, probably, his effusive prayer for the arising of a political wizard, some Prospero, who would solve the Irish difficulty, no matter from which of the front benches he came. At this Mr. GLADSTONE laughed and Mr. CHICHESTER FORTESCUE looked conscious. Then a story of an interchange of ideas with an American citizen on the social condition of Ireland was well told, the first imitation of the peculiar accent of the American being very successful in arousing laughter, though the subsequent carrying on of one side of the dialogue in a special vernacular fell rather flat. Again, a description of what would be the feeling of England if the Roman Catholic Church was dominant there, and particularly the effect of such a state of things on Mr. NEWDEGATE and Mr. WHALLEY, was smart, though the illustration was carried out to an extent somewhat risky for a member of that Church. Notable, too, was it that there cropped up every now



and then, it may be involuntarily, a particular among the general grievances of Ireland,—namely, the non-construction of docks and arsenals at Cork. As to his points, in brief they were these:—Ireland just now has been deprived of her constitutional liberty, and is held by military and police occupation; any idea of her increased prosperity which prevails founded on a comparison of her condition in 1851 and 1867 must disappear when the comparison is made with 1859; and there was disaffection amongst the greatest number of the population, while the well-affected were in despair of any amelioration of their country. The Encumbered Estates Court had operated only to change one set of Soil-Lord oppressors for another; and, as regarded the land question, to security of tenure we must come. What, then, was the Government about to do to settle that question, he demanded, and in the same breath denounced any idea of “Commissions”! The disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church was distinctly asked for, and, besides a system of education founded on a consideration of the religious feelings of the majority of the people, and a fair share of the national expenditure to be showered on Ireland! Royal visits to Ireland were not despised, though not much relied on, while the erection of a royal palace was not objectionable; and, although the purchase of Irish railways by Government might be acceptable, that must be preceded by measures which would produce a prosperous population, in order to get traffic. As to emigration, it would be better that no resort should be had to it,—on the system which now rendered every expatriated Irishman an implacable enemy to England. With a sounding and well-rounded peroration, in the course of which there was an adjuration to throw all prejudices, including those as to the private rights of individual property, to the winds, he concluded a speech which to the end was unquestionably received with great favor by the House of the Common men. To him succeeded Mr. NEATE, with his semi-droll amendment about the bad consequences of impracticable, extravagant, and impossible resolutions in reference to Ireland, which was supported by what may be certainly called an appropriate speech. The hon. gentleman readily withdrew it in favor of Lord ARTHUR CLINTON, for whom there was a decided call. The artificially noble Lord rose, sat down, rose again, and once more sat down; so that Sir FREDERICK HEYGATE, who had another amendment, asserting the necessity of inquiry before legislation, struck in and delivered a speech, which was so arithmetical that it sounded like the reading of a balance-sheet. At length Lord ARTHUR CLINTON got his opportunity, and on his rising, and ever and anon while he spoke, was most kindly cheered. He went on glibly enough, with the assistance of a suspiciously thick bundle of papers in his hand, to pronounce an expansion of his expansive resolution. He was at least plain in advice to the House of the Common men to support the Government if they attempted to solve the Irish problem. The time which it was desirable to fill up before the Minister for Ireland rose was occupied with unction by Mr. O’BEIRNE. The advent of Lord MAYO of course re-peopled the empty House, and the artificially noble Lord went at once into the defensive part of his subject. In the outset he put several points effectively enough, as when he showed that the disaffection and disloyalty undeniably existing amongst the Irish at home and in America, did not exist in Australia and Canada. It was with something like spirit that he combated the assertion that Ireland was governed by England after



the manner of a foreign despotic Power, and also the dangerous dogma that the Irish people had been dispossessed of the land by confiscation; but when he came to deal with the denial of any sensible improvement in the condition of Ireland he became severely statistical on increased cattle, bank deposits, &c., and was curiously exact in gauging prosperity by the consumption of spirits. The mode in which he sought to argue away the several plans relating to land tenure of Mr. BRIGHT, Mr. MILL, and Sir JOHN GRAY, seemed to be felt as rather ponderous. All this time, the suggestion of his speech was, that he was leading up to an argument that very little or nothing was required to be done for Ireland. Possibly the evident failure of his voice induced him to forego some further preliminary elaboration; and as he began to talk of governing Ireland impartially, there was hope that he was approaching the pith of the matter. Still, however, under manifest physical difficulty he continued to hover round and about the question. At length it came out that he proposed to introduce measures providing for tenants' compensation; for improving the system of leases by limited owners; and to encourage written contracts in the letting of land. There was a cheer at each of these propositions, but not the slightest rousing of the House of the Common men out of the quiet and patient attention which had characterized it hitherto. An announcement that there was to be a further solemn inquiry into the whole state of the relations between Soil-Lord and tenant, brought out what sounded very like a contemptuous laugh. With something like definiteness, he said that he would attempt to deal with railways before Easter. As to general education, that was being ground through the mill of a Commission. Out of a cloud of circumlocution, at last there came a statement that there is to be permitted the erection of a Roman Catholic University,—that is, a Charter is to be granted to such an institution! Without referring to the piling up of grounds for such a course, it may suffice to say that the question of the Irish Church is relegated to next Session, pending the inquiry now carried on by a Commission. So much as has been thus generally stated, and no more, was the actual result of over three hours' Parliamentary parturition.

Mr. MAGUIRE, in moving that the House should resolve itself into a committee to consider the state and circumstances of Ireland, reviewed the whole condition of the country, remarked on the wide-spread disaffection which existed, and the tardy legislative concessions which had invariably been made by Parliament through fear, not from generosity. As to the land question, the great evil was the want of security of tenure; and a Bill, to be satisfactory now, must, in addition to giving full security for the future, protect from "rapacity and caprice" improvements made by tenant-farmers upon their farms. He denied the loyalty attributed to these farmers by Lord MAYO; and denounced the system by which London companies held land in Ireland. Next, he demanded to know, "without evasion, shuffling, or dodging" (all these phrases used in a Parliamentary sense), what Government intended to do with the Irish Church. Another Commission would not do: they had already had enough of them. Mr. MAGUIRE must have caused some amusement when he pictured Mr. WHALLEY, and Mr. NEWDEGATE holding high office in some Fenian Brotherhood, were it the case that in England the Roman Catholics received all the endowments, and Archbishop Manning dwelt in pomp in Lambeth Palace. In conclusion, he strongly condemned the proposal to pay the Catholic priests, "be-



believing that the moment they received the pay of the State they would be converted into spies or stipendiaries." He thought the suggestion to purchase the Irish railways was worthy of consideration. Very naturally, Lord MAYO took a much more favorable view of the present state of Ireland than did Mr. MAGUIRE. The proposals which he made in the name of the Government were to introduce a Land Bill similar to that which he had introduced last year, believing that it would provide an easy method of compensation for improvements, and would authorize loans for improvements by the tenants, in the same manner as loans were now made to the Soil-Lords. Still, his lordship considered more information was wanted, and for this purpose a Commission would be issued to inquire into the relations of Soil-Lord and tenant. The Reform Bill for Ireland was promised to be introduced on the 16th or 19th current; and, before Easter, it was proposed to bring in a Bill rendering the "working of railways in Ireland more efficient"—their purchase is not hinted at. The question of education was already under the consideration of a royal Commission. The next great proposal of Government is to grant a Charter to a Roman Catholic University, with a Senate, consisting of a Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, four Prelates nominated by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and six elected laymen. Parliament is to be asked to pay for the building, the officers and professors, and probably the endowment of some University Scholarship. As to the Irish Church, nothing will be done with it till the present Commission gives in its report; and even then nothing seems to be contemplated, as Lord MAYO thinks it could not be overthrown without a fierce and protracted struggle, and if it were to fall it would "inflict incalculable injury on the country." The debate was then adjourned to the following Thursday, on the motion of Mr. HORSMAN; and, in answer to Mr. GLADSTONE, Lord MAYO said Government intended to oppose both the motion of Mr. MAGUIRE and the amendment of Sir F. HEYGATE.

Having thus afforded you proof of some of the attention which I have given to the commencement of the Irish debate and to your Government programme, I must now hasten to observe that Ireland found on the evening of the 10th current in the hon. member for Cork a faithful and eloquent representative of her wrongs. With a characteristic Celtic warmth,—with generous but not extravagant energy,—he drew a picture of this hapless country, which if seen by the British people at a distance—along the banks of the Vistula say, or under the sway of the Ottoman Turk—would fill Tory as well as Liberal minds with pity, indignation, and a determined demand for Justice. He described a portion of the British islands—an integral part of that which is called by a hundred colonial cities the "Mother Country"—swarming with soldiers,—trained mankillers,—and covered with garrisons. Some 25,000 soldiers and 13,000 police, drilled and armed with the deadliest weapons of modern times, hold her like a conquered dependency; ships of war patrol all her seas, gun-boats anchor on her quiet and lovely rivers; and the palladium of individual liberty, the Habeas Corpus, is suspended; so that the word of a paid spy, the suspicion of a constable, or the oath of a proved perjurer is good against the liberty of any marked man. Mr. MAGUIRE spoke of a land upon which adversity is settling like a black cloud—the crops falling short, the peasants flying from starvation at home to take their bitter memories with them across the Atlantic. He portrayed a remaining population into whose



mental constitutions despair is entering—despair of any justice from a caste of Protestant Soil-Lords—of any cure, except, probably, by bloody remedies. Speaking always with facts and figures to support his earnest complaints, he pointed to a part of her Majesty's dominions where, against every principle of moral right, the Church of the small minority possesses all the ecclesiastical endowments ; a case not less gross and intolerable, he said, than if Archbishop Manning flaunted the pomp of Rome in the face of the Protestant millions of England, with the tithes to pay for it, or, on the strength of the handful of Roman Catholics among us, went in procession to offer Mass in St. Paul's. In contrast with this fat Church of the small minority, pampered upon revenues sequestered from Catholics, the Catholics maintain their own Church by the pence of the " boys ;" and, while they ask to be delivered from the insult and brand of an alien Establishment, they not only do not ask, but refuse endowment. The land, rack-rented by absentee Soil-Lords, worked by tenants who have no security for investments but their Soil-Lord's good pleasure, cries in vain for laws which will give back confidence to the husbandman, and tempt from the banks their timid stores of gold. In the face of the atrocious violation of morality perpetrated under cover of the law, and in its sacred name, two-thirds of the population which live by the soil refuse to believe in any future. Keenly they note the machinations of Fenianism, and turn to America with a perilous air of hope. A land with fruitful mothers and a failing population, with a rich soil and empty granaries, with nine-tenths of its people Catholics and its revenues escheated to the Protestant one-tenth—a land with millions living upon their patches of ground, which they love beyond even other Celtic races—is lying at the caprice of proprietors, whom the law will help with horse, foot, and dragoons to drive men and women, old and young, into the workhouse or the midnight-drill party. Mr. MAGUIRE's American friend, he told us, did not ill condense the feeling which such a picture must cause in any civilized mind, when he said, " What ! no leases—no security for improvements ! Men and women bought and sold with the estates ! Estates racked by London companies and absentee noblemen ! And the thing goes on, and you are not quite sure whether you will wipe this incubus Church from off the face of the island ; and whether you care to save four million people from the absolute necessity of revolution !" And he might have continued,—“ Has the organ of Conscientiousness disappeared from British Brains ? Is the sense of Justice dead in British statesmen ?” With Irish shrewdness the ardent speaker went on to deprecate all delay and compromise. Let us have no Commission, he said, to examine into that which everybody knows ; we do not ask whether a dean has too much or too little, or whether a bishop is or is not starving on five thousand a year. We demand to be freed from a Church which is the badge of our humiliation and historic suffering. Don't plaster our wounds with Royal visits, nor, when we ask for land laws, give us Emigration Commissioners ! Dis-establish and disendow this ecclesiastical tyranny, and bestow the funds on the destitute. Let the Protestants who are rich maintain their own Church, as the poor Catholics do, and let the Irish tenant be certain that, if he puts his gold honestly into the soil he can get it out again. Let this be done, the advocate of Ireland urged with eloquent energy of conviction, and you need not patrol our island with ships-of-war, nor try to silence her with the shadow of the gallows.



Justice and British goodwill may keep her from the frenzy of despair; commission and solemn shams, guns and gallows, will not do it. The Member for Cork bade the British public choose between prompt equity towards Ireland or something worse than the worst yet seen in this difficulty and disgrace to Britain. Your Irish Secretary, Lord MAYO, after stating that the Irish in Australia were not active Fenians, confessed that the lower classes in Ireland largely sympathized with Fenianism. He painted the state of Ireland, however, in rosy colors, which were cleverly laid on, but failed to cover the gloomy canvas. He tried to comfort the Irish Rachel "Weeping in Rama" with a biographical sketch of those who actively rule the country. He calmly denied that there was any great decay or dissatisfaction, all things considered. He consoled the Nation for Fenianism by ample statistics, and, instead of giving a direct reply to the statements of Mr. MAGUIRE, he presented the House of the Common men with a carefully compiled report upon agricultural progress. If there was no Justice in Ireland, at least there were splendid roads; and, if Habeas Corpus was suspended, railway works were not. Also, the Irish were loyal enough to hold Irish South-Western stock, and consumed much beer and whisky. After these and other encouraging but rather irrelevant particulars, the Irish Secretary stated the Government view of panaceas for Ireland. One might wonder why any panaceas should be needed at all, things being so completely satisfactory. But yielding to the general feeling, rather than to any especial necessity for Irish legislation, the Minister had a new policy for this happy and prosperous country. And this was it: after a tedious speech on the Land Question, which wore out the curiosity of the most active members of the House of Common men, Lord MAYO offered to introduce, almost immediately, a Bill, like his former one, upon Tenant Compensation, and to put into it provisions for written contracts instead of parole agreements. He announced a Commission of "Enquiry" into the relations of Soil-Lord and tenant. He promised an Irish Reform Bill, and assistance to Irish Railways; as for Education, he spoke of efforts to set it straight by another Commission, and proposed to give a Charter to the Catholic University. Last of all he spoke of the Irish Church; and, fairly summarized, his words were to this effect, that, as a Commission was sitting to inquire into the whole subject, it would be unwise to adopt any decided legislation until the business of the Commission had terminated and the report had been presented. The public will still miss—as the House of the Common men evidently did—an answer to the crying question of the day. In what spirit, and with what intention, does the Government approach that most urgent task—the settlement of the Church problem? The first night of the great Irish debate leaves this momentous topic involved in the most tantalizing if not a hazardous mystery.

Lord MAYO would have done well had he begun within the second half of his late oration. In the first place, the whole speech was painfully long: three hours' talking on a well-threshed subject is in itself a new Irish grievance. But the after part of the speech was so much better than the earlier part, that I can only suppose that Lord MAYO's oratory, like a new cask of ale, runs off somewhat muddily at the first. The members of the House of the Common men had a long preamble of statistics, likely enough to mislead; and then, to take the unpleasant taste of such stuff out of their mouths, they had



a short statement of some sensible concessions, the utterance of some excellent sentiment, and a plausible apology for a postponement of action. I do not wish to treat the public as Lord MAYO treated the unfortunate House of the Common men, and to begin by wearying them with his so-called "facts:" I prefer to pluck the plumbs out of the big pudding,—one-half of which is oratorical dough of the most indigestible description. The Government will grant a Charter to the Roman Catholic University, so that the majority of the Irish people will have equality at least in higher education. There will be a new Tenant-right Bill, similar to that of last year,—probably better, probably worse; for Lord MAYO is not very clear. Beyond these two facts nothing is to be done. But politicians are having, or will have, abundant inquiry: two Commissions, one on the Church, and another on primary Education, are already sitting; and a third is to be issued, to inquire into the laws relating to Land. Lord MAYO, however,—and here comes some of the most valuable parts of his speech,—let fall expressions which, if they mean anything, indicate a great change in the old Tory policy of "No surrender." He said, "There would not, I believe, be any objection to make *all Churches equal*." That a Tory Minister should utter those words is a political event of no small significance. The avowal intimates that, at last, Protestant ascendancy is to be abolished; at last the Irish people are to have an end of the predominance of the Anglican Church; at last, the Church of the majority of the people is to be raised to an "equality,"—the word is too good not to be repeated very often,—with the Church of the Anglican minority. It is the business of the Liberal party not to let the declaration remain a barren phrase at the end of a long speech; it must become the motto of the House of the Common men. It is the key-word of the whole ecclesiastical situation. "Equality of all Irish Churches." Let it be kept before our eyes as the "one thing needful." Britain must thank the Irish Secretary for uttering the words. Readily recognizing what is good in Lord MAYO's speech, I must perforce take exception to the unfortunate exordium. I never read such a mass of misleading statistics. The Irish Secretary declares that Fenianism would die out if we could only keep out the American element. If so, why not enrol the numerous Irish loyalists as special constables and volunteers? The answer simply is that there are no "numerous Irish loyalists" to enrol. He declares that Ireland is governed by five Irishmen. Why, the same could have been said in the worst days of the detested ascendancy; it was Irish judges and magistrates who administered the penal laws, and Irish yeomen and police who executed them. But, then, they were Irishmen who were Anglican in religion and by descent. What is the curse of Ireland and the cause of its discontent? The ascendancy of one Sect and the depression of the creed of the majority. And yet Lord MAYO points to five Protestants at the head of the Government as a proof that Roman Catholic Ireland ought to be content. He might as well have said that the majority of the Irish Protestant bishops and clergy of the Establishment are Irish, to show how very happy the Roman Catholics must be since they are plundered by their own countrymen. Lord MAYO knows as well I do that the fact of his being an Irishman does not give the slightest satisfaction to the majority of the Irish people, and that they would much prefer an English Liberal in his place. "Then, the local magistrates are Irish to a man,"—yes, and he might



have added, "Orangemen almost to a man,"—Protestants, certainly, and, as a rule, steeped in stupid bigotry to the lips. "The paid magistrates are Irish,"—but the majority are Protestants. "In every Town you find a municipality elected on a wide Franchise,"—but to counter-balance it, in every County you find a nominee Grand Jury, nearly all Protestants and Tories, allowed to vote away as they like, the County rates paid exclusively by tenants,—that is, almost entirely by Roman Catholics. "The Poor-law system," adds Lord Mayo, "is managed by elected Guardians,"—yes, but about one-third of each Board is composed of Protestant magistrates who are *ex-officio* members. Next come columns of statistics,—But what would a statesman say to proofs of agricultural progress which entirely omit the annual value of crops—the one decisive test—which omit the amount or value of produce per acre, and which show as their best results, that since 1849,—a year when the famine had hardly ceased to act,—the total number of cultivated acres has *not* increased? Since 1841, no doubt, live stock has increased, simply because tillage has decreased. If, however, Ireland progresses in this way her people may show in twenty-seven more years a magnificent increase of stock, but a decrease of three millions in population, and a decrease in the total annual value of Irish produce. Ireland taken as a whole would make a very good cattle run and sheep farm; statesmen should only have to clear out the surplus population, leaving herdsmen and dairymaids enough; and then the Lord Mayo of the next generation could show that, since there was a greater display of live stock, the condition of the island had decidedly improved. But the crowning glory of Lord Mayo's figures comes in the facts that the Soil-Lords get more rents,—to spend in London and abroad,—and that the tenants drink more whisky! Admirable proofs of real progress! Yet obstinate people assert that the Roman Catholics in Ireland are discontented and depressed;—How can they be so when they have five Protestants at the Castle to rule them, when the Protestant Soil-Lords extort every year more and more rent, and when they go oftener than ever to the whisky-bottle to drown their cares? With such consolations,—Why should they mind the steady decrease of the population, the steady decrease in the total annual value of Irish products,—the steady decrease in tillage,—the steady decrease of produce per acre,—the steady decrease of inhabited houses,—the steady decrease of loyalty,—the steady decrease of trust in Parliamentary measures of redress? But the Irish are now to have Equality,—How, then, is it to be carried out? That is the question. Lord Mayo decides against total disendowment, or, as he calls it, "confiscation:" he will not have "leveling down." He, therefore, aims at what is rather loosely, though idiomatically, called "leveling up;" that is, I suppose, Acts of Parliament are to put all Churches on a level, by elevating those which are depressed. Now, if this means that the Anglican Irish Church is to remain intact, and that the Presbyterian and the Roman Catholic bodies are to receive from the State equivalent endowments, the idea is simply insane; it would necessitate a grant of at least £600,000 a-year to the Presbyterians in Ireland, and of at least £3,500,000 a-year to the Roman Catholics—all to be paid by that much-enduring tax-payer, JOHN BULL. That is, of course, impossible; no member in his senses would propose such a plan. Nevertheless, still keeping "Equality" before us as our goal,—How is it to be accomplished on any Tory principle, except by a partial "leveling down" of the Anglican Church?—and Lord Mayo's lan-



guage, if examined, indicates as much : “ The question must be dealt with in a different spirit from that which advocates *entire* abolition.” “ The Protestant Church, I believe, is not at all adverse to an *alteration* of their position.” He also intimated that the present Commission would inquire whether the Church Revenues “ are, or are not, sufficient, or *more than sufficient*, for their objects.” When Reformers couple with these declarations the denunciation of the grant to the Presbyterians as “ miserable,” and the policy of equivalent endowment indicated in the proposed grant to the Catholic University, they can pretty fairly anticipate the Tory ideas. In the first place, Protestant ascendancy is doomed. We are to have no more of the venerable rubbish about the duty of the State to supply Ireland, as the well-paid Bishop of Ossory says, “ with pure ritual and Scriptural truth ;” we are to have the State now offering to recognize and endow the Church of the Catholic majority and the secondary Protestant Church. But while the Liberal party may eagerly accept the principle of “ equality” set forth by Lord Mayo, and profess readiness to hear his plan of equivalent endowment, it must in the interest of Irish Reform add, that the British taxpayer will be excessively reluctant to pay towards the religious expenses of any Irish Sect. If the *Regium Donum* is not sufficient, it should be supplemented from Irish, not from Imperial, funds. If the Roman Catholic Church is to be endowed, no additional burthen must be laid on the British taxpayer—now little better than an overladen Abyssinian mule. I do not say that I accept the new Tory principle of general endowment—that is a question which remains to be settled after a careful survey of the whole political situation—but it will prove a hard task to obtain a general endowment out of British taxes. Without anticipating my differences with your present Ministry, I may take note of the common platform on which all parties now stand. “ Equality of all Irish Churches and Sects” is the admitted end and aim of future Irish legislation. The Liberal party long since proclaimed it : Mr. BRIGHT’s plan of partial disendowment, leaving a million to each of the three Churches, is based on it ; all schemes of redistribution—Lord RUSSELL’s, Mr. HERBERT STACK’s, Mr. ARNOLD’s, and Mr. DE VERE’s—rely on it ; and now a Tory Ministry has written the same motto on the flag that waves over the Treasury Bench. Here, then, is something like progress distinctly marked.

The Ministerial programme with respect to Ireland, as announced by Lord MAYO—on the evening of the 10th current—is very much what was expected. He promises to introduce, I suppose with considerable modifications, his Land Improvement Bill of last session, and another for extending the powers of limited owners. A measure for the better working of the Irish railways is also promised. The resource of a Royal Commission, of course, never fails you and your colleagues. Another Commission of Inquiry into the land question is to be proposed. But the most specific announcement of Lord MAYO is the grant of a Charter to the Catholic University, with a Parliamentary provision for “ the expenses of the building, and the officers and professors, and probably, Parliament will not feel indisposed to endow certain University Scholarships.” Here, then, the Nation has the redemption of your promise to The O’DONOGHUE. The motive of this concession is not concealed. It is obviously to save Trinity College. After this boon to the Roman Catholics, it is hoped that, on the question of the Irish Church, the policy of delay may be acquiesced in. You are not in



favor of "any immediate action" with respect to the Establishment. You propose waiting for the report of the Commission, and until the assembling of the new Parliament. On this point you are evidently ready to join battle, and are preparing for a desperate resistance. "I do not believe," said Lord Mayo, "that the Irish Church could be overthrown without a fierce and protracted struggle, and, if it were to fall, it would inflict incalculable injury on the country." With regard to the Establishment, then, you mean "No Surrender!" The Opposition are not likely to acquiesce tamely in this policy. If Ireland is not to be reformed, her condition is now, at all events, to be thoroughly talked about. The Irish Reform Bill is to be introduced, which will, at least, have the advantage of bringing the attention of the House of the Common men to the practical details of legislation; instead of permitting Members to lose themselves in a maze of declaration and rhetoric about all things in general and about nothing in particular. It is not at all to be wondered at that a Tory Ministry, even with a chief like you who is supposed to be utterly free from scruples and prejudices, should endeavor to temporize with the desire for Irish Reforms. You cannot induce your Irish supporters to consent to the measures really demanded by public opinion in Britain. There is no cause to suppose that the Tories in England and Scotland are much attached to the Irish branch of the Establishment, or that they at all, approve of a system of land tenure which, contrary to what prevails in these countries, affords no compensation at common law for improvements that the tenant may have made out of his own pocket, and that may have directly added to the value of the Soil-Lord's property. There is no cause to suppose that the violent and intemperate party spirit which once divided Great Britain into two distinct parties, distrusting and hating each other, now exists with anything like its ancient bitterness. The virus has lost much of its former strength. It is now becoming comparatively innoxious. Since the repeal of the Corn Laws and the adoption of the principle of unlimited competition even by the Protectionist leaders themselves, there has been little real difference between the moderate and sensible men who compose the majority of both parties. Two years ago, indeed, when the Reform Bill of the late Government was introduced, it seemed for a moment that the country gentlemen, who cheered so frantically Mr. Lowe's denunciations of the proposed reduction of the Borough Franchise from ten to seven pounds, as a descent to the level plain of Democracy, and who were so much in love with the Tory statesmanship of Sir HUGH CAIRNS in denying that even personal fitness constituted a right to vote, were prepared to take up their former ground of stubborn resistance to all legislation in accordance with the spirit of the age. A few months' enjoyment of the "honors and emoluments," however, changed all this. The great concession of last Session proved that it was useless in England to act on the old lines of unbending resistance; and the English Tories are more indulgent now than they ever were before, to their opponents, because, to say the truth, the rank-and-file of the party, who receive few personal gratifications in the shape of official distinctions, are not a little ashamed of themselves. They have the unpleasant consciousness that they have appeared in a very ridiculous light; that their opponents are secretly laughing at them; and that the pleasure of following you, and of being "educated" by you, is not, after all, the highest to which a Tory Soil-Lord, devoted to the insti-



tutions of his country, might aspire. They are disposed to show something of tenderness even to Mr. BRIGHT, who, until last Session, was the object of their passionate detestation. The Toryism of Ireland has, however, long differed from the Toryism of England. Englishmen, whatever may be their differences on certain subjects, may fairly be considered united. Irishmen are, however, divided from each other by the most positive demarcations. There is nothing in common between an Ulster Soil-Lord, returned to Parliament by a dependent tenantry, and by the influence of the Orange Lodges—which, whatever they may be in the future, have hitherto been convenient and submissive instruments of the aristocracy—and an Irish Catholic Member, sent to Parliament in opposition to the territorial influences, and by the votes of the Catholic people, under the direction of the priests. A great deal has been said of the advantages of conducting Irish affairs, by an understanding among the Irish Members, as the business of Scotland is transacted by the Scotch Members, who meet and consult together, so that the business of legislation in the House is often little more than formal. It is very seldom, indeed, that there is a warm Scotch debate, like the ordinary style of Irish debates. But the cause why Scotch Members can meet together and settle amicably among themselves any difference which may arise on legislative measures is, that their differences are not generally on principles, but only on details which can admit of discussion and of arrangement. All Scotchmen are pre-eminently proud of being Scotchmen, and are devoted to the honor and glory of Scotland. They do not care to make their country ridiculous in the eyes of Englishmen and Irishmen. Though they may disagree on party politics as much as Englishmen can differ, there is no intense bitterness; and their common country forms a powerful bond of union. But there is no such powerful bond of union among the Irish Members. They are not so proud of uniting together as Irishmen, as of being Irish Tories, devoted to the Protestant Establishment; and Catholic Members are bent on making the supposed interests of their religion the first consideration in all their politics. The Irish Liberal Protestant element, which may be considered impartial, is virtually unrepresented in the House of the Common men; and there is, probably, no representation of any minority so desirable as that of the intelligent and liberal classes in Ireland, neither devoted to the Established Church, nor to the exclusive interests of the Papacy. The influence of such an independent Liberal party would be mediatorial and healing. No two sections of the House of the Common men differ so much as the Irish Tory Members and the Irish Roman Catholic Members. The fact of them being all Irishmen seems to intensify their differences rather than to soften their asperities. The Irish Tory Member acknowledges that he is sent to the House of the Common men to speak for a small and privileged class of his countrymen, who are now, indeed, on the defensive; but who, having long enjoyed an exclusive ascendancy, both political and religious, cannot bear to accept a position of mere equality. Many of them have to the Liberal Catholic representatives who sit opposite to them the feelings now entertained by the Southern planters to their emancipated slaves. So long as the Established Church remains as it is, the symbol of an ascendancy which has become utterly untenable and is virtually given up, Reformers must expect those strong class prejudices to continue. It does not follow that they will immediately abate after this great Reform has been



accomplished. It is certain, however, that, so long as this great grievance remains as it is, the agitation which is raging around it, will be kept alive, and that the two classes will continue embittered against each other. The Irish Tory, devoted to his Church, regards other classes of Irishmen who desire to remove it with an animosity which no Englishmen can feel towards other Englishmen, and no Scotchmen to other Scotchmen. I believe, therefore, that it is a really Liberal policy at once, to set about disestablishing an institution which does not unite Irishmen, but which, the longer it remains, will continue to divide them. That we are now in the third year of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, is a sufficient cause for setting at once to grapple with an evil which, out of Ireland is all but universally admitted and deplored. The great objection to what is called an Irish nationality is, that there is, and can be, no such thing, as representing what surely a nationality ought to do—the unity of the people. There could, for instance, be no Irish Parliament in which COL. STUART KNOX and THE O'DONOGHUE could amicably sit together as representing differing sections of their countrymen. When the Established Church has been really brought to a level with the other Churches in Ireland, and some reform in the land tenure has been effected, such as nearly all people acknowledge to be desirable, except the Irish Tories, who look upon the present state of things as the best for the maintenance of their political supremacy, politicians may hope that the good intentions of British statesmen with respect to this country will receive fair play; and that the British Parliament, in which all classes of Irishmen may be adequately represented, will have a far more beneficial influence on Ireland than a so-called National Parliament could have, in which the two irreconcilable sections would stand in close juxtaposition, and be ready to wage an interminable war. But to accomplish this desirable result, the temporizing policy of which LORD MAYO was the official organ, will have to be at once abandoned. It is very unfortunate that a Government which has to consult the Ulster Tory Brigade is called upon, in order to remain in office, to adopt measures bitterly opposed to the prejudices of this, the most extreme section of its followers. This embarrassment was plainly visible in LORD MAYO's speech on the evening of the 10th current, and in the proposals he had to make.

Reformers now know what the intentions of the Tories are respecting the condition of Ireland. The Earl of MAYO, the Secretary of State for Ireland, has favored the House of the Common men and the Nation with the outline of the remedial measures which your Government proposes to apply to Ireland, for the removal of the widespread disaffection and popular misery which have made this glorious but unhappy country a standing scandal and peril to England,—a marvel and an object of compassion to the rest of the civilized world. These remedial measures are of the paltriest description. In amount they are infinitesimally small, and to a certain extent based upon the homœopathic theory of medicine, which assumes that “like cures like,” or that the drugs which produce symptoms similar to the disease are the proper ones to be employed for its cure. Then, those paltry and absurd remedies are to be applied only to the outside, or surface, of the patient. The Earl of MAYO, yourself, and your fellow-quacks have come, or pretend you have come, to the conclusion that the ailments of Ireland are only skin-deep, and that superficial, or topical, treatment is all that she requires. Therefore, for the virulent cancer of Soil-Lordism, that is rapidly eating its



way to the heart of the Nation, you propose a plaster of written leases. For the removal of the deep disaffection from the Irish brain, you propose to tickle the political epidermis of the people by a Franchise Bill, such as that passed for England last year; and for the banishment of the demon of pious discord, it is proposed to found and endow another sectarian university. This last proposal it is that smacks of the homœopathic system of medicine. It is a prescription for the removal of pious *delirium tremens*, by giving the Irish "a hair of the dog that bit them." The Protestants have Trinity College, Dublin, for the inculcation of theological bigotry, and political narrow-mindedness and intolerance,—therefore, let the Roman Catholics have another university, exclusively occupied with the education of Roman Catholic young men. Now, this proposal, though contemptible as a counter-active for the evil that now rages, and ravages throughout the veins and arteries of the Irish body politic, has an ingredient of equity to recommend it to British acceptance, were it not that it is intended to carry it into effect by a measure of injustice to other people. The Roman Catholics have as good a right to a university of their own as the Church of England Protestants; and, considering the millions upon millions of Roman Catholic money that have been pocketed by Protestant Soil-Lords and Protestant Parsons, it would be no more than a trifling instalment of the debt due to the plundered and insulted Catholics if the aforesaid Soil-Lords and Parsons were to build and endow a university,—or, indeed, a score of universities,—for the education of the Irish Catholic youths. But this is not the way in which it is proposed to defray the expenses of the contemplated university. The British Parliament is a Parliament of Soil-Lords, and as the Soil-Lords are intimately related to the Protestant Parsons, Parliament is exceedingly careful of the pecuniary interests of these highly-favored and privileged parties. Reformers are not, therefore, surprised to learn that the Government does not ask or intend to pay the expenses of the proposed university out of national property now monopolized by the Protestant Church, or out of the pockets of absentee or other Irish Soil-owners. Nothing of the kind. The duty of these pampered favorites of the State is to receive, not to give; to take money from the pockets of other people, not to give any out of their own; to devour, and grow fat and insolent upon, the taxes wrung from the straining sinews of half-starved peasants and mechanics, not to contribute to the support of institutions calculated to ameliorate the social or intellectual condition of these peasants or mechanics. Therefore, the Tories propose, that the working classes of England and Scotland, not the Irish Soil-Lords and State Parsons, should be still further taxed—that is, robbed—to pay the cost of a university for the Roman Catholics, such university being a manifest sop to the terrible Cerberus of Irish disaffection. There can be no mistake as to the object of this measure. It is intended to conciliate the Roman Catholic priests,—to enlist them in the same service as the Protestant Parsons,—to make them spiritual policemen for upholding the reign of alien and absentee Soil-Lordism, and working-class starvation and disaffection, in Ireland. Yes! the working men of the Three Queendoms are to be still further plundered for the advantage of the heartless and rapacious Soil-Lord class, whose misgovernment has brought Ireland and the British Empire to their present dangerous state, and whose entire energies have been consecrated to the maintenance of the working classes of the Three Queen-



doms in a state of social and political servitude. Therefore, as a matter of course, the working men of England and Scotland will cheerfully submit to further fiscal extortion for the safety of Irish Soil-Lords and the defence of the *regime* of the spy, the informer, the gaoler, the hangman, the Rent-Claiming exterminator, and the bloated State Parson in that favored portion of the British empire, I say "favored," because according to the Earl of Mayo, Ireland is exceptionally fortunate. Indeed, upon the showing of this great statesman (?) Ireland is a pre-eminently progressive country; and of all nations in Europe, the Irish have the least cause for political disaffection. The artificially noble earl has gone into a long series of statistics, from which he draws the conclusion, that within the last century the material wealth of Ireland has increased. From this fact, he argues they have no just ground for complaint, and that only a few legislative measures, dealing with some paltry superficial sores, are required to render the Irish farmers, artizans, and shopkeepers as "loyal" as the Lord Lieutenant himself, or as the hundreds of absentee Soil-owners, who draw millions of money every year from the industry of Ireland, and expend it in the pursuit of pleasure in foreign countries. There is, however, one important fact which Lord Mayo has overlooked or ignored in the course of his argument, but which, unless it be considered and appreciated, will prevent Reformers ever getting at the root of Irish disaffection. I now refer to the distribution, or the appropriation of the increased material wealth to which his lordship triumphantly points. Within the last century the produce of the Irish land has increased, say, tenfold. Now, this in itself "is" a highly encouraging fact. But of what use is that increase to the poor organisms who till and fertilize the soil, if they are not permitted to participate in this prosperity? If the whole of this increased produce flows into the pockets of the privileged sensualists who are empowered by the laws of the British Parliament, and the arms of the British people, to plunder the hard-working men and women whose toil gives value to the soil, in order that the said privileged sensualists may revel incessantly in all the pleasures which the perverted civilization of foreign lands can supply for money,—What benefit do their serfs and drudges derive therefrom? In 1846-7, when upwards of a million of the Irish people died of famine, Ireland was considerably richer than in 1826-7. It is well known that in the time of the terrific famine twenty-years ago, enough food to feed the starving Irish was exported from the country, to be sold in London, and in other markets, the money to go into the pockets of the absentee Soil-owners. The Earl of Mayo's reply to those who attribute Irish disaffection to Irish misery is the same,—as if a fat flunkey were to comfort the famishing poor of a country parish by informing them that the income of the Archbishop and the interior furnishing of his pious Palace were more splendid, ample, and luxurious than they were at any former period. Earl Mayo's development of Ministerial intentions, and the Irish discussion of which it forms a part, is a melancholy illustration of the imbecility of British Statesmanship, under the existing political dispensation, for the removal of any one of the gigantic iniquities which doom the industrious millions to indigence, and allow the unproductive, the lazy, and the useless thousands of privileged aristocrats to wallow in superfluities. Still, this discussion is not without some advantage. For though it does not light up the way out of the Irish difficulty, it throws a great deal of light upon the confusion, the feebleness, and the



craven selfishness that becloud the brains and paralyze the councils of the decaying caste that keeps Ireland in a chronic state of squalid misery and sullen disaffection. There has been light enough evolved from the speeches made in the course of this debate to make the darkness that envelops the minds of our rulers visible, and to strengthen the conviction that from neither the Tories nor the Whigs any substantial measure of justice for Ireland is to be expected ; and that not until the reign of aristocratic ascendancy is displaced for that of popular sovereignty will the Irish people become loyal, or the British empire become secure from the subtle treasons and the profound popular discontent by which the very foundations of our National greatness are being constantly undermined.

We now know all that we have to expect from your Cabinet,—her Majesty's present advisers,—with respect to this country. After so many delays, so much speculation, and a considerable amount of anxiety, your Irish Secretary, Lord MAYO, at about midnight of Tuesday, the 10th current, laid his good things one by one on the table of the House of the Common men. The effect was, it must be confessed, not overpowering. Some of the new lamps were old ones furbished up for the occasion ; and there was, probably, but one of them which could be regarded by you as Prime Minister, and your colleagues as anything more than a plaything adapted, it may be, to amuse the House of the Common men, and to while away the busy hours of the Session ; but never intended nor desired to take effect practically in legislation. Mr. GLADSTONE had long advised the amalgamation, and even the purchase, of the Irish railways. On this subject the public mind is made up ; and the task of your Cabinet as Ministers with regard to it, is little more than perfunctory. Supposing, therefore, the measure which is announced to be what the country has been led to expect, it cannot be said that the preparation of such a scheme to give more “ efficiency to the working of the Irish railways ” called for any great powers of statesmanship. But it is impossible to form any adequate idea of the railway measure from the few words uttered describing it ; and the value of the Land Improvement Bill, which he declares to be similar to what he introduced last year, depends on the details, of which the public, as yet, know nothing. Lord MAYO's Bill of last year had the great defect of proposing to give tenants-at-will the power of borrowing money on the estates of their Soil-Lords, and this afforded those borrowers no security of tenure for any term of years, in order to carry their improvements into effect. The money which was nominally lent to the tenants was really to the Soil-Lords. It was a questionable boon to both proprietors and tenants. Instead of encouraging leases, its effect would have been deterrent ; and I know that, though you, at the end of the last Session, taunted the Liberal party with not supporting the Bill, it was really delayed, and finally abandoned, in obedience to the remonstrances of the Irish Tory Members, who had the most positive and insurmountable objections to a plan which seemed almost revolutionary in principle, and yet proposed to do nothing to justify so bold and hazardous an innovation. I have little doubt that the measure which is to be re-introduced will be found considerably improved. It is impossible, however, to avoid seeing that the Bill is not seriously proposed ; that it will only be brought forward to be postponed ; that, when the month of August arrives, it will be abandoned after having answered its purpose of deferring a settlement of a very awkward and difficult question. The



Government of which you are the chief, undertake to legislate on the land question, and at the same time advise another Royal Commission. The two propositions are partially contradictory; but the object is the same. It is delay. The testing question at the present moment is that of the Irish Church. To estimate correctly your Ministerial policy, the proposal to grant a Charter to the Catholic University, not only with present but prospective endowments, and the unequivocal declaration of Lord MAYO, that the Government are not prepared to deal with the Establishment, must be considered together. The Commission now inquiring into the distribution of the revenues of the Irish Establishment was limited to a particular object. It had nothing whatever to do with the fundamental question, whether such a Church, representing a small and sectionable minority, ought to exist in Ireland? We want, indeed, no Royal Commission, no inquiry into details to try to persuade us that such a Church, after several centuries of acknowledged inefficacy, ought to continue. The question does not admit of argument. To enter into details at this day on such a subject is, in fact, to insult our understandings. Your Government, however, affirm that you will, when the Commissioners have made their report, not be disinclined to consider how the revenues of the Establishment can be better applied for their special purposes. But you will entertain no proposal to disestablish this Episcopal Church. Here your Cabinet Ministers make your stand. Here you draw out your line of battle. Here we have the most complete illustration of the "really Conservative policy" which you told the Tory members at your official residence on Thursday, the 5th current, your Government would pursue, and of the "Liberal, the truly liberal policy," from which, three hours later on the same afternoon, you informed the House of the Common men, you and your colleagues would never swerve. With Lord MAYO the Establishment is not an injustice which ought to be remedied, a grievance to be redressed, or an evil to be abolished. It is a positive good, which ought to be chivalrously maintained against all comers. Ireland, it seems, could scarcely exist without it: if it were to be destroyed, the country would perish with it. After so much circumlocution, and the constant artifice of making words to do duty for things, or after, according to Lord RUSSELL, saying one thing and meaning another, it is some satisfaction to find one of your colleagues speaking from his central faculty, and, in unmistakable language, expressing his genuine convictions. It is something to be told that, if the Established Church in Ireland is to fall, it will be only after a fierce and protracted struggle, and that, in the opinion of Lord MAYO and his colleagues, "its fall would inflict incalculable injury on the country." But why is Lord MAYO thus confident and plain-spoken? He presents us with an extensive view of endless endowments and concessions to the Roman Catholics as an inducement for them to acquiesce in the existence of this Irish Establishment, and its favorite and kindred institution, Trinity College. The Catholic prelates wanted a Charter for their university, and only acquiesced in the Supplemental Charter for the Queen's University as a make-shift. Your present Ministry offer more than a Charter. The expenses of the building, the offices, the professors, and certain scholarships are all to be provided by the State; nor do the good intentions of her Majesty's Government stop here. Colleges, as they come into existence, are also to be endowed for the Catholics, in the present; and, in the future, they are to have sub-



stantial grounds for being grateful to her Majesty's Government, if only they will not deal hardly with Trinity College and the Establishment. That which it is hoped will make the Catholics contented with a subordinate position,—much endowment,—has made Lord MAYO bold. He says, truly enough, that he does not wish to do any harm to Trinity College; but it is mere mockery to say that, after the proposed Charter and endowment for the Catholic University, the Queen's University and mixed education will remain as they are. The Queen's Colleges in Galway and Cork can scarcely hope to exist side by side with endowed colleges of a Catholic University. Hitherto, mixed and non-sectarian education has been supported by the State, as an impartial system, adapted to Protestants and Catholics alike. Your Government now propose, however, deliberately to set up denominational institutions side by side with the Queen's Colleges. It must soon become a question whether both kinds of institutions can be maintained out of the public purse. Your proposal through Lord MAYO and your other colleagues really brings forward the whole question of endowments. It cannot be shirked. Can it be right thus to pay out of the taxation of the country for new denominational institutions when there is an institution,—possessing large revenues now utterly misapplied,—which might, were the intentions of your Government really honest and upright, be altered to answer every object of the Roman Catholics, while being really reformed in correspondence with its original character, and made “the mother of a University?” The truth is that you, Lord MAYO, and your other colleagues,—those among you all who have any convictions,—are denominationalists, and your sole object is to save richly-endowed denominational institutions of your own faith, by proposing to endow other denominational institutions of another faith. This is your policy. It remains to be seen whether the Nation will acquiesce in it. You tell us, through Sidonia, that the “Age of Ruins is passed:”—Is not the Age of Denominational Endowments by the State in a country of different and contradictory religious persuasions also fast passing away?

The country is really prosperous—a country could scarcely flourish under bad institutions—therefore, the Irish Established Church must be a good institution, and ought to be maintained. This is the Tory syllogism; but, like many other syllogisms, it really proves nothing. It all depends upon the premises; and it is the easiest thing in the world to bring out any conclusion from a *major* and a *minor* judiciously chosen. It is now apparent that you will leave Ireland very much as you found it. You have been in office for nearly two years, and yet your Irish legislation is a blank. This might be justifiable enough if you admitted that no legislative reforms were required. But you do no such thing. You announced, loudly enough, that you had a brand-new policy for Ireland at the beginning of the Session. After we had waited very long, that policy was explained by Lord MAYO, and not a single one of the measures then shadowed forth will be seriously attempted to be made law. We have had two Parliamentary Sessions since you, then Chancellor of the Exchequer,—now our Prime Minister, declared that you were a regularly qualified State physician, and not a quack; that Ireland was suffering under a severe drain of her population, but that you had yourself a styptic which would soon do wonders in restoring the interesting patient to health. If this really be the policy which you believe to be right,—Why, I ask, has not the styptic



been applied? We have waited two Sessions for your styptic. It has not been produced. Now, this looks very much like trifling. The truth of it is, that your Government cannot legislate satisfactorily on Irish affairs. Your highest ambition is to keep your place, by keeping things as they are; you therefore talk vaguely of your good intentions, and indulge in pompous phrases, which, when carefully scrutinized, have no meaning.

The debate on the Irish question on the evening of the 12th did not a little towards defining the points at issue, and clearing the ground for action. Really striking speeches were delivered by Mr. HORSMAN, Mr. LOWE, and Mr. MILL; all of them more pointed in style, more forcible, and more vivacious, than the harangues of the evening of the 10th. The House had something to cheer, to laugh at, to contest; the depressing atmosphere of courteous sleepy inattention, often so marked in Parliamentary debates, gave place to brisk, eager, animated interest. At the very outset, Mr. HORSMAN roused his hearers by his description of LORD MAYO's dubious course. There are two capital subjects of State policy inviting, nay more, demanding immediate handling:—What does your Government propose to do with them? Your Church policy is one of “masterly inactivity;” and your course bearing upon the relations of the people to the land is one of procrastination. Inquiries without end are to be instituted—indeed, Ireland has been put under Commission; but throughout the whole scheme of your Cabinet the eye of a microscopic philosopher would look in vain for a principle. LORD MAYO had performed an ungrateful task; he had to pretend that he was expounding a policy when in reality he had none to expound. Upon one point alone was he definite—he announced the intention of the Government to grant a Charter to a Roman Catholic university; and, according to Mr. HORSMAN, that project not only involves the endowment of the Ultramontane party, but it sacrifices the laity to the priests, gives direct support to the Papal assault upon mixed education, and strives to undo the great work accomplished by LORD STANLEY in 1831. Mr. HORSMAN only expressed the general feeling when he said that LORD MAYO's exposition had caused great disappointment. Your Government has missed a great opportunity; you might have initiated a generous policy, got out of the old ruts, recognized that the diseases of Ireland are diseases of the heart, and adopted measures to satisfy the real wants of the people—you might have seen that there could be no contentment as long as the Irish Church is a favored Church. “What,” said Mr. HORSMAN, “is your principle? Is it still Protestant ascendancy, or is it for the principle of religious equality?” This was the key-note of the speech. Ireland should be governed in accordance with her wishes and feelings, and the crisis demands religious equality, certain tenure, and unsectarian education. Nor was the debate without a peculiarly arousing episode in the shape of a duel, or single combat, between the two philosophers of the House, the great Logician and the great Australian. In fulfillment of the floating expectation, Mr. LOWE dashed into a sparkling refutation of Mr. MILL's Irish pamphlet, and the nature of the assailant's doctrines, uttered with a laughing accent, may be inferred from the fact that he threw the Tory squires into convulsions of delight, reminding close observers of the ecstasies of encouragement bestowed on the same orator's anti-Reform philippics of 1866. On the land question, indeed, Mr. LOWE is the philosopher of the Tory party; but he rushes to the opposite enthusiasm when he



speaks of the Church and Education. On these subjects he becomes in earnest; the tone of his voice even changes, his elocution is less indistinct and more emphatic. With solemn fervor he denounced the policy of giving a Charter to the Roman Catholic University as unworthy of a "truly Liberal" Government; as a concession to a hierarchy which obeys the behests of a foreign Power; as a bribe to gain electioneering influence; as a sacrifice of the laity who have supported the National Schools and the Queen's Colleges; as a device to serve a momentary exigency. But he fulminated his thunderbolts equally against Catholic and Protestant. You, the Government, he said, are not going to touch the root of the evil—the Established Church; and, vaunting his plain speech, he declared that Britain shall not have broken with an evil past until her people have abolished this last iniquitous relic of the bad old days. Holding that the QUEEN and the Parliament are the trustees of the property enjoyed by the Irish Church, he roundly declared that it ought to be administered for the benefit of the Irish people at large. The tide of opinion, so far as it has hitherto flowed, sets steadily towards the establishment of religious equality, and the further and fuller development of unsectarian education. The member for Calne indicated at least his method of attaining religious equality by openly raising his hand against all creeds alike; summarily settling the troublous Irish Church question by leveling every Church at a blow—in Ireland. The philosopher of the Liberal party met his antagonist befittingly on both the issues of his speech. The passion of the anti-ecclesiast was answered by an impressive calmness. Mr. MILL did not expect the Government to be in advance of public opinion, but only abreast of it, and he called for great measures to redress great evils. No doubt he declared "every human being" to have made up his mind on the Irish Church, which—within certain geographical and statistical limits, is tolerably true; only it so happens that every human being has made up his mind in a sense opposite to the conviction of his neighbors; so that for the Government to be "abreast" of public opinion, it ought to be torn with conflicting ideas. But, at all events, Mr. MILL was as temperate in his language as he was general in the form of his demands. And in vindicating his land projects against his savage aggressor he did not deny the good tendency or generous spirit of past Reforms. The discussion of the evening of the 12th, though unaccompanied by the adoption of any definite proposition, has been by no means barren of result. Reformers must have clearly observed that the extreme views of those who, on the one hand, would subvert every existing institution, or, on the other, would maintain every existing abuse, find no favor with the Imperial Parliament. Moreover, the course of the controversy was practically narrowing the questions at issue to a remarkable degree. On both sides of the House it was admitted that the position of the Established Church in Ireland is the point to which the attention of the Legislature must first be devoted. At the present moment any measure brought forward with a view to remodelling the ecclesiastical condition of Ireland must have been crude and unsatisfactory. Even if it were possible, which I doubt, that a perfect measure could now be framed, Reformers should deprecate its introduction before further and fuller consideration had won for it the assent of public opinion. I wish that justice should be done to Ireland, not as the result of a party victory, but as the product of the deliberate judgment of the British



people. This being so, I find no fault either with the Government or the Opposition, because, as yet, neither declines to pledge itself to any specific course with respect to the Irish Church. The principle for which I have contended throughout,—that of absolute political equality between rival creeds,—has made good progress throughout the preliminary inquiry, and has received the assent of influential speakers belonging to many different schools of politics. What Reformers desire now is, that this great principle should receive the distinct and final recognition of the party of progress.

Saturday is, during the Parliamentary season, generally a day for Cabinet Councils. The debates of the week are over. The Ministers meet together to take stock, to count their losses and gains, and to decide on their course for at least the ensuing week. Last Saturday, then, I suppose, that you, as our Prime Minister, met your colleagues, after a few days of active political warfare. Your faces must have been of the blankest; the party could scarcely have been very pleasant. "The mountebank," who, according to ADDISON and Mr. BRIGHT, had attempted in Buckinghamshire or elsewhere to sell pills as an unfailing remedy against an earthquake, could not, though his countenance might be remarkable for stolidity, when he did not wish it to be expressive, have been very confident and radiant when he met his confederates in the caravan, or in a private room of the ale-house in the village, and had to admit that blandishments, jokes, and confident assertions had been unavailing. Even the simple country people would not buy the pills; they might believe in the earthquake, but not in the medicine, nor in the doctor, whom they had seen, probably, in another costume, undertaking to swallow quart pots, and even standing on a pole for a considerable time, with his head downwards, much to the awe of the little boys. Though he now appears as the President of the College of Physicians, intelligent people know that he is not a regular practitioner; that it is easy enough to detect the airs of the traveling showman; that there is something of sawdust, of the carpet, of the spring-board, of balancing and of posturing about their old friend. He now wears robes of dignity, and is surrounded by an imposing retinue of questioning and unquestioning pupils. But the old habits cannot be altogether thrown aside: what he was fitted for by Nature and by constant practice he is compelled to be to the end. *Belphegor*, in the third act of the drama, when he appears as a French marquis, has the powerfully-developed muscles of the *saltimbanque*, and astonishes the fine company by bursting forth, after the fashion of the tumbler, "Come round; come round! Just a-going to begin!" I might say, according to another illustration, that the performance in the first-class theater, and before a numerous and fashionable audience, has begun. The people, however, don't like it. The hissing is loud and general; and the elaborate entertainment is already pronounced to be an imposition. The public are demanding back their money, and threatening indignantly to terminate that which was represented in the bills to be a great legitimate Irish play, and is found to be a low farce, with much tumbling and clowning. Lord MAYO was put forth with a loud flourish of trumpets and beating of drums to announce a policy. It was to be such a policy. For weeks the people had been somewhat impatiently kept waiting. We had a new Prime Minister who had been praised as a great original genius—as a sort of literary divinity, before whom, the whole literary class were exhorted to fall down and



worship, and to teach the profane world to worship, There was something very degrading to the literary profession in such appeals. They were not justified by anything you had done either in the world of letters or in the world of statesmanship. Even during last Session, which has been represented as so satisfactory to you, your triumph was purely personal. It was gained at an almost incredible and quite an unprecedented sacrifice. Those who interpret rightly the events of last Session will certainly never wish to see such another. It was calculated to bring all statesmanship into disrepute; it was politically most demoralizing; it was a surrender of the functions of the Cabinet to any haphazard majority in the House of the Common men. No person to whom the credit of Parliament and the honor of our public men are dear would desire to see the proceedings of last Session repeated. Are they going to be repeated? This is what every independent Reformer, and every independent Member of Parliament, are asking. Your Irish policy is even more completely a failure now than the thirteen Reform resolutions and the Reform Bill No. 1 were at the beginning of last Session. The position of your Government, with regard to the great Irish question, is just what it was on the Reform question. But the dual vote, the six pound rating Franchise, and the fancy Franchise were not so strongly condemned last March as the proposition to establish a new denominational university in Ireland, and the refusal to deal with the Irish Church Establishment are this March. Both what Lord Mayo and his colleagues declared themselves ready to do, and what they as unequivocally refused to do, are equally out of harmony with the feeling of the House of the Common men, as expressed by its ablest and most influential representatives and the leading organs of public opinion. Such unanimity has seldom before been displayed. The discussion of Thursday and Friday night was unusually brilliant. Had the Ministerial policy been at all defensible, the debate might have become, as was feared, discursive and useless. As it is, however, the speeches have been essentially practical. The Ministerial proposals, before they are formally introduced, are repudiated by the House of the Common men and the Nation. The majority of the members, and all the intelligent and liberal classes out of doors, seem agreed in declaring that religious equality must be produced. They will not, however, have this result brought about by indiscriminate or universal endowment. The policy I have so long advocated is evidently accepted by the Legislature and the people. It is now plain enough that a majority of the House of the Common men has already decided that the Irish State Church shall fall, and that the proposed "bribe" to the Irish Presbyterians by increasing the *Regium Donum*, and the simultaneous "bribe" to the Roman Catholics in the shape of a new denominational university, shall not be given. Mr. BRIGHT never achieved a greater Parliamentary success than on last Friday night; and his speech was thoroughly in unison with the prevailing feeling in the House of the Common men and in the country. While replying to Lord MAYO, Mr. BRIGHT, on those two questions which are here regarded with so much interest, said,—“What does he really propose? Why, to add another buttress to the Establishment in the shape of a bribe. He says he will offer to the Catholic hierarchy and the Catholic people of Ireland a thing which the people don't want, but which the hierarchy does. Lord MAYO then went on to touch upon the *Regium Donum*, and to speak of it, I think, as a miserable provision for the Presbyterians



in the North of Ireland. If he had the courage—the desperate courage—he would probably have proposed to endow the Catholic University, and to increase, or even double the *Regium Donum*. Lord Mayo does not express dissent, and I rather think he wishes it were safely done. But the object of the proposal is this—What Lord Mayo would like to have said to the members who represent the Catholic population in the House, and what he would like to have said to the Presbyterians of the North of Ireland, is this—“If you will continue to support the Established Church in Ireland and its supremacy,” to the one, “we will endow your university”—a university really, if not professedly, under clerical rule—and to the other, “We will double your stipends by doubling the *Regium Donum*.” Now, I fondly hope that Lord Mayo will not think I am saying anything uncivil,—but I must say that his proposal appears to me at once grotesque and imbecile. There will be no newly-endowed Catholic University, and no increase of the *Regium Donum* at the expense of the taxpayers of the United Queenom. Is it to have been untrue to the interests of the Liberal party—is it to have divided that party, thus to have consistently told the people this truth? The compact at the Langham Hotel is repudiated with the whole of the Irish policy of the Government. A Liberal party that had to be maintained by such “bribes” would not be worth preserving; and the most cheering indication of the prospects of the Liberal party is the unanimity with which the Government scheme has been condemned.

Some politicians have expressed impatience at the certain prospect of an inconclusive ending of the debate; but, in the present state of affairs, nothing can be more natural or more just. In the first place, it is the duty of Reformers to give your Ministry ample opportunity and full time to mature and declare your policy. If the Opposition brought forward any motion embodying a decisive opinion, they would immediately arouse the old party feelings, while side issues connected with the fate of your Ministry or the duration of Parliament would arise to complicate matters, and the Nation should be launched into all the irritating and irrelevant excitement of a great party fight. The present attitude of the Opposition—not hostile but expectant—imposes on your Government a serious responsibility; for if you fail to indicate the spirit of a good Irish policy, you will be left without excuse. You cannot afterwards say that you have not had fair play. You cannot accuse the Liberal party of any factious urgency or undue pressure; you must confess that you have had a clear stage and a full allowance of time for the development of any policy. Nor need the Liberals take any great credit to their party for a generous forbearance in pressing their own united opinion on the Ministry. The fact is—and I may mention it as a profound party secret—they have no united opinion to press. The general tone of the Liberal party is sound; and with respect to the proper spirit of their legislation for Ireland, there is practically no difference of opinion. It has been well said, that “There is no Tea-room on the question of the Irish Church.” But an advance from principles to details finds even now a diversity of practical views that would probably show themselves more clearly if Reformers came to discuss the clauses of a bill. The debate, therefore, will not only give your Ministry an opportunity to develop your policy—and, as you are a Darwinian in politics, you are a believer in development—but it will also enable the abundant “Liberalism” of the Opposition to form a policy



capable of being embodied in practical legislation. The difference between the two parties in the case of Ireland is, that the Liberals are thoroughly agreed as to the principles of action, while the Tories are not, but that they have not yet shaped out a policy in detail. We are just one stage beyond our opponents. If you will not soon after the close of this debate, let us understand clearly the actual principles of your Irish scheme, the Liberal party must and will advance, and you will be left two stages behind. But when the Liberal party have embodied their Irish creed in distinct Parliamentary declarations, as they must and will do during the session, your opportunity will be lost. The fate of the Ministry will then be decided on the hustings at the next general election, and you will meet, as Premier, a new Parliament elected to turn you out. This language may be thought rather rude; but it simply anticipates the course of events. All, therefore, depends on the final resolve of your Ministry as it may be made known by yourself at the close of the debate. On last Friday, at least one valuable addition was made to the discussion of the subject. Mr. BRIGHT's plan for the partial settlement of the land question was, though not unimportant, the smallest part of his speech. I am not going to discuss it now. But, with reference both to his proposal and to that of Mr. MILL, I may give one warning to antagonists like Lord DUFFERIN, who debate the matter merely from an economical point of view. They altogether omit one side of the question. The economical results of any scheme might be very small, and yet the political and moral results very considerable. For instance, to use an illustration that Lord DUFFERIN thoroughly understands, let us take Tenant Right as it is practised in Ulster. Anybody who has studied the subject must be struck with the cloud of witnesses—Lord DUFFERIN himself amongst them—who testify that it has often a most injurious effect in depriving the incoming tenant of his capital at the very time that he most wants it; yet these very witnesses testify that it has preserved a good feeling between Soil-Lord and tenant, that it has permitted the development of industry in Ulster, and that if we abolish the privilege by law, we should, probably, cause a local insurrection. In the same way, many measures giving to the Irish peasantry security of tenure might or might not be small or slow in their actual industrial effects; but it would be a great thing if we compelled the people to admit that Parliament had legislated with a view to their good, and if their food, however scanty, were “unleavened with a sense of injustice,” I know now that, however just some or many Soil-Lords may be, and however idle some or many Irish tenants may be, it is possible for a Rent-claimer to reap an increased rent, due entirely to improvements made by the tenant, and that this robbery can be wrought under the form of law. A similar conviction finally caused the doom of slavery. It was said that slaveholders were generally mild and just, and negro slaves generally lazy; but, after all, it was possible for a planter to treat his slaves with gross injustice, and many of his cruelties could be perpetrated under cover of the law. Politicians cannot in this world redress all wrongs, but they can repeal all laws that aid or sanction injustice. As to the Irish Church, Reformers must fully accept Mr. BRIGHT's statement that as it stands “it is doomed.” As a State Church in Ireland it cannot stand; as the only endowed Church in Ireland it cannot stand; it must be partially or entirely disendowed. Mr. BRIGHT declares for “equality on the voluntary principle,” leaving to each Church a certain small and independent



endowment. His plan so far recommends itself that it is at once thorough in principle and considerate in its practical application. One word addressed to the Nonconformists of England and Scotland especially deserves to be well weighed by the British people: "They should bear in mind that the whole of this property which is now in the possession of the Established Church of Ireland is Irish property." If the inferences from this fact were fully accepted the ground of discussion would be greatly cleared. In the first place, the Irish have a right to their own ecclesiastical property, and, *e converso*, no right to put their hands into the pockets of English taxpayers. Then, they have a right to distribute that ecclesiastical property according to the wishes of the majority of the Irish Nation. These two principles are great beacon lights that warn us off many shoals and quicksands, and will guide us safely into port. I could not express in better language the hopes excited by what some persons call "this mere debate" than in Mr. BRIGHT's well-chosen words: "There is much shower and much sunshine between the sowing of the seed and the reaping of the harvest, but the harvest is reaped after all." The whole of the great speech from which I quote these words was a magnificent contribution to the public discussion of the question. If the debate had no other result, this noble Oration would amply repay the House of the Common men and the Nation for the time that has been spent. Ever since the virtual settlement of the Franchise question, Mr. BRIGHT has raised himself from his prominent position as the tribune of the people to become what, without undue praise, may be called a national man. His peculiar and personal position has helped him. As one of an excessively unestablished sect—a sect that develops intense individuality of religious feeling,—he is free from any prejudice in favor even of the smallest Nonconformist body, and he is enabled to view with impartial indifference all secular organizations for the propagation of religious views. Then the fact that he has never been officially connected with either of the great parties of the State lifts him above the atmosphere of suspicion. His vehemence also, and the intensity of his feelings on political questions, never mislead him into any malignity of attack. He hits hard, but with a kind manly reserve of manner that shows full strength even after the blow is given, and complete control of temper while delivering it. For clearness of statement, for apt and homely illustration, for genial humor in rallying opponents, for practical good sense, for a pure nobleness of feeling, pathetic in its simplicity and depth, the Oration of last Friday evening was unsurpassed; and I doubt whether, in any time, any man has given forth in any senate a more perfect utterance of manly and persuasive speech. Nor can Reformers forget that Mr. BRIGHT is accustomed to success. He is not the spoiled child of victory, for victory has not spoiled him; but he has achieved more difficult things than that justice to Ireland for which he now so admirably pleads. He struggled for years to destroy Protection; it is gone. He advocated Household Suffrage; it is accomplished. He denounced the compulsory collection of church-rates; it is about to disappear. He now prophesies the removal of the old ascendancy and old agrarian systems that have wrought such mischief in Ireland, and he helps to fulfill his prophecy by an exposition of the great evils they have caused. His success hitherto has been due to the fact that, however antagonistic Mr. BRIGHT may appear to many mere Tories, he is, in truth, a man whose sympathies are much wider and deeper than his



antipathies; he has many honest prepossessions, and is essentially an Englishman. He is also,—and the fact is not trifling,—a man of genius. He can perfectly understand the feelings of those who stand opposed to him; and therefore he has the power of compelling them to hear him,—of piercing them to the quick as he directs their thoughts, and of indicting their prejudices at the tribunal of mental reflection. His words cannot die with the sound, nor slumber in the pages that record them; they will make the debate memorable, and one day will flower into fact.

The Irish policy of your Administration may be explained in a very few words. On the land question, it adheres to the measure introduced last year, with some alterations; and, on the Church question, it adopts the principle of religious equality, but seeks to give effect to this policy by preserving existing institutions at the price of indiscriminate endowment. Lord Mayo's speech, which commenced at nine o'clock on Tuesday night, and terminated precisely at one on Wednesday morning, the 11th current, was not favorably received. It was very long, very painstaking, and very dull. The House of the Common men had been kept waiting several weeks for the announcement of the Irish policy of your Government; after Lord Mayo had been speaking for three hours on Tuesday night, his audience were still waiting for his promised plans of Irish Reform. At last, however, they were slowly, and with evident embarrassment, produced to a wearied house of the representatives of the Common men of the Nation. They then amounted to just what I have described. In one sense, they may be considered satisfactory. We have a Conservative Government, and an Irish Chief Secretary, representing the Toryism of Ulster, formally abandoning the principle of ascendancy. It is not now a question of our "Protestant institutions" by themselves;—it is, how to preserve our Protestant institutions by originating similar Roman Catholic institutions at the expense of the taxpayers, and thus make one set balance the other. No person can read the speech of the Chief Secretary with any intelligence, and deny that this was its unmistakable meaning. Lord Mayo implied a great deal more than he expressed; he seemed afraid to say openly all he desired; but, at all events, the Tory transition is unequivocal. It is no use, therefore, appealing any longer to Irish Presbyterians and Wesleyans to come forward in support of our Protestant institutions, as representing even the protest of a small minority against what they call "idolatry." What, then, was the object of the men who organized the Hillsborough demonstration and the Ulster Protestant Defence Association? They simply meant a defence of "the honors and emoluments." Religion had nothing whatever to do with the agitation. The enlightened and well-conducted *Northern Whig* remarked immediately after the Rotundo meeting,—and only last Saturday, in commenting on the proceedings of Thursday evening week in the Ulster Hall, that "there was a suspicious absence of any condemnation of the proposed endowment of all religions, as advocated by great Tory authorities, and that this so-called Protestant Defence Association looked very much like an Indiscriminate Endowment Association in disguise." The justice of this remark is now amply illustrated. It is evident that some of the scheming organizers of those meetings knew well enough what was coming. They did not wish to embarrass you and your colleagues by any unseasonable resolutions against a system of general endowment. Most sensible



people have thought that we are already paying dear enough for the maintenance of the Established Church, and its outwork,—Trinity College, Dublin,—so far as the enjoyment of the prodigal revenues is concerned. It seems, however, that the people are to pay a great deal more for the possession of such blessings. That the injustice, which it is admitted has become intolerable, of thus keeping up such institutions for a small and wealthy minority may be remedied, we are to have endowments everywhere, and on the most extensive scale. The Catholic University is but a first step. The Government plainly acknowledge that they will give whatever the Catholics will accept. The only difficulty in the way of the enjoyment of this golden shower falling bountifully on the majority, as well as on the minority, in Ireland, is,—that the Catholics do not appear to have quite such accommodating consciences as the defenders of the Establishment, and as those Irish Presbyterian clergymen who have asked for an increase of the Regium Donum at any price—thus directly misrepresenting the feeling that prevails in the Irish Presbyterian Church, and being utterly untrue to its interests. The very decided condemnation with which the negative as well as the positive policy of your Government has been received, cannot be expected to add to your prospects of official stability. It is, however, of the highest importance that the really sincere, though misled, partizans of “our Protestant institutions” should learn from Lord Mayo’s lips what the phrase now really means, so that they may know what they have to expect in the future, and judge whether writers like myself, or those organs that have so long traded on their prejudices, have really told them the truth. So far as the Government on Tuesday night, the 10th current, were understood to have pledged themselves to maintain the Establishment, they were expected to have adhered to the policy of “No Surrender!” It will be seen, however, from the most undeniable evidence, that “No Surrender” on your, and Lord Mayo’s lips, means the most ample and complete surrender of everything but money. It means, indeed, giving up the principle of an Establishment, and keeping the money of the Establishment. It means even more than this. To keep this money, you seek to produce equality by giving away the money of other people. The Irish Catholics and the Irish Presbyterians—for they are associated together on this principle—are to be bribed largely out of the public purse, in order that the Irish Establishment and Trinity College may continue to possess all their monopolies. With regard to the University question, Lord Mayo said,—“Were we about to commence from the beginning, it would be better to have but one university for Ireland; but, as things stand, it is better to supplement and to add, rather than to pull down and destroy.” These words, though only directed expressly to the University question, in fact comprehend the whole policy of your Administration on the Church question. A Catholic University is to be established and maintained by the State, but “altogether free from Government control”; and, said Lord Mayo, with an amusing candor and simplicity,—“I beg leave to point out that the institution which it is proposed to originate does not resemble in any way any existing university in the United Kingdom.” “The state of the Established Church,” remarks the Chief Secretary, “has considerably improved.” But he does not tell us how. It cannot be by fulfilling the mission of such an Establishment, and converting the Irish Roman Catholics. It has been the richly-endowed Church of



a small minority for three hundred years ; and it is the richly-endowed Church of a small minority now. It must not, however, be overthrown. "Anything but that," virtually says Lord MAYO. He observes, evidently speaking under the inspiration of Sir FREDERICK HEYGATE, and the recent meeting of the Irish Tory members at the Langham Hotel, "the Presbyterians are receiving a grant which is at best but a miserable apology, and the Protestant Church is not at all averse to an alteration of their position." "A miserable apology" the *Regium Donum* may be if it be compared with the revenues of the Establishment ; but it is not "a miserable apology," if it be considered in connection with the fact, that the other Protestant Dissenters and the Roman Catholics are supporting their own clergy, and have also to pay for the Establishment. Why should the taxpayers of Scotland, England, and Ireland be called upon to contribute more money for the support of the Rev. JOHN ROGERS and his following in the Presbyterian Church? Lord MAYO observed immediately afterwards,—“We must not proceed hastily ; but of all the schemes which have been proposed, I object pre-eminently to that known as the process of leveling down.” But Lord MAYO does not say that he objects to the scheme of leveling up. He is in favor of it ; and therefore wishes, as I have said, to level up, against his own wishes, the Catholic Church. His words are explicit : they are literally,—“There would not be any objection to make all Churches equal ; but the result must be secured by elevation, and not by confiscation.” Here, then, is the end of the exclusive Episcopalian ascendancy. The policy of the “Quarterly Review,” the policy of Lord ELLENBOROUGH and Lord HARDWICKE, is accepted by our present Ministers ; and religious equality is to be produced by indiscriminate endowment, whether the people and the clergy like it or not. Turning to the comments of the Ministerial organ—the *Standard*—on Lord MAYO’s speech, I find his policy of leveling up fully explained. “It might,” said the *Standard* of last Wednesday, “be politic to make provision for the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic clergy ; it cannot be politic to rob and exasperate the Churchmen.” No person can really doubt, therefore, that the principle of religious equality is accepted even by her Majesty’s present advisers. Thus far has their “education” come. They are, however, unwilling pupils, and are not turning their newly-acquired knowledge to the right account. I would ask the most sincere and resolute friends of Irish Protestantism if the exceptional privileges and emoluments of this Irish Established Church are worth maintaining on the conditions proposed ? Why should not all Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, after existing rights have been carefully respected, be left equally to maintain their own clergy ? In this manner the solution of this Church question is simple. Any other is beset with insuperable difficulties. A stand must be maintained at once in the interests of religious equality itself, against this Erastian policy of indiscriminate endowment. Neither Protestants nor Catholics will have it.

Prolonged from speaker to speaker through a chain of deliverances, now bright with the gold of thought, now dull as lead, now brass-like with the audacity of ignorance and selfishness, the Irish debate, which commenced on the 10th current, sprang into life again on the evening of the 16th, at ten o’clock, and was subsequently brought to a temporary conclusion at an early hour on last Tuesday morning. The rising of Mr. GLADSTONE was the signal for an extraordinary demon-



stration of interest. A ringing continuous cheer hailed the Liberal leader as he advanced to the table ; and the echo brought the outlying members flocking into the House from tea-room and lobby ; so that, before the sound of this cordial salute was well over, the Chamber, which had been scantily tenanted, was suddenly quite full. The chief of the Liberal party lost no time in making his opinions clear respecting the character of the debate. He did not waste many words before he charged the Government in a stern and vigorous manner with having “ failed to realize the crisis.” Ireland, he declared, had an account unsettled, a debt due, in payment for which the Government of her Majesty had offered nothing but dreary statistics, and scarcely so much as a distant “ promise to pay.” In the opinion of the civilized world, in the mouths of all just and enlightened men, abroad as well as at home, Britain stands arraigned for not having done nearly enough to be “ in the right ” as regards the unhappy country whose sighs break the peace of Europe. Mr. GLADSTONE had, in these very few sentences, given promise of an earnest speech, which he went on to keep up with every word. Quoting BURKE, he invoked, instead of the languid optimism of Lord MAYO, the “ early and provident fear, which is the mother of security.” For himself, he protested he would liberate his conscience from delays that offend the principles of Justice and imperil the very safety of the Empire. The House of the Common men was now roused thoroughly from lethargy ; it rang with excitement and assent when Mr. GLADSTONE scourged the small theories of the Irish Secretary. “ Not time,” as yet, to deal liberally with the problems of the land—when we had been hard at it for seven hundred years ! Or could the Treasury Bench dare to pronounce the word “ Justice ” in the same utterance by which they even pretended to believe that the Irish Establishment could be maintained ? If, as Lord MAYO said, Irishmen in Canada and Australia were not Fenians, what did that mean except that, in those colonies the consciences of Irish people had not been insulted by an alien and dominant Church, nor their pockets picked by a system which robs them of their investments in the soil ? “ Portentous ” was the moral of the difference—“ rotten ” the argument which could found delay on such facts. Again these unsparing adjectives were cheered to the echo,—as the House found out that, if there were followers in the Liberal party who don’t follow, Mr. BOUVIERIE and others were likely to learn that its leader meant to lead. Reviewing the chief topics of the question, and pausing a little to deride the idea of healing the wounds of Erin with a grant to this branch line and a job in that rural corner, Mr. GLADSTONE thundered out of existence the educational scheme of Lord MAYO. Dead against the traditions of Parliament,—sectarian and useless,—popular with neither Protestant nor Catholic,—and, like another famous Tory effort, a mere “ leap in the dark,” this “ notion ” of Irish education, the speaker declared, was not worthy of discussion. With respect to the Land Tenure, the Liberal leader protested that the debt of legislation to Ireland was cruelly overdue. Even in the Encumbered Estates Court, a “ boon ” as that is called, the improvements of tenants had been sold over their heads for the benefit of Soil-Lords. Here came, incidentally, a most important declaration. Mr. GLADSTONE protested, that in the case, not only of Ireland, but of England, he regarded the law which, failing a covenant, made the investments of tenants the property of the Soil-Lord, to be radically a bad law, mitigated in England by customs and un-



written codes, but across the Irish Channel unmitigated and intolerable. Mr. GLADSTONE declined to follow the lead of the Member for Westminster, which, he thought, meant "the dismissal of landlords;" but he would stop at no practical and just measure to obtain "fixity of tenure." He found nothing subversive or violent in the plan of Mr. BRIGHT; and a joyous laugh rang through the Liberal benches as the hint seemed to be dropped that the revenues of the Establishment might do to begin with. The cheers redoubled when, approaching the main topic of the debate, Mr. GLADSTONE repudiated the idea that the Church of England would be endangered if justice were done upon the Church in Ireland. "The Church in England," said the Liberal leader, "must not trust to outworks in countries where the presence of those outworks is a tyranny; it must trust to its own merits and virtues, and live where it has a right to live by its manifest vitality." Laughing to scorn the proposition of a Commission issued to see what is wrong about the Irish Church, when what is wrong is simply that it exists at all, Mr. GLADSTONE declared in earnest tones that "*That Church must cease to exist.*" A burst of energetic cheering broke forth, and rang the knell of the last great badge of conquest and ascendancy in Ireland, of which these few words will be recorded as the sentence. The debate was instantly relieved from its character of sterile eloquence by the clear and certain manifestation of Liberal policy; and, while he demanded "religious equality," Mr. GLADSTONE explained what he meant by it. He meant by disestablishment the putting an end to the existence of the State Church in Ireland; and at this renewed definition the aspect of the Protestant squires was most touching to watch. They listened like prisoners at a condemned sermon; and the followers of Mr. NEWDEGATE, who had rejoiced at the refusal to endow a Catholic University, sat now "in silence locked." Nevertheless, cheers with a new and "fighting" ring resounded when the Liberal leader said that, unless you, the Premier, and you sometimes did, expand the useless programme of your Irish Secretary, it would be the duty and course of the Opposition to propose and carry into action, if obliged, a scheme to do absolute justice,—in deeds, not words,—to wronged Ireland; for "when the case is ripe, and the hour is come, justice delayed is justice denied." It was the "very witching hour of night" when you, our literary Prime Minister, rose to wind up the historical debate, and to show that office has not taken off the edge from your sharp tongue. You like to start with a laugh upon your side, especially when you can thus partly dissipate the profound and serious effect which your great opponent leaves by a peroration like the noble one of last Monday evening. You got a laugh out of the position into which Mr. GLADSTONE had placed you, as a most unfortunate Premier who had inherited the crisis of seven hundred years at its culminating point. On serious thought, there is less of the comic, probably, than the true in the statement and the complaint. The crisis and your Premiership have certainly arrived together in our annals, whether the company is mutually agreeable and suitable or not. You spent some time and energy in replying to Mr. HORSMAN about the Synod of Thurles before you proceeded to declare that the crisis in Ireland was "got up" by your right honorable antagonist, and was a "monstrous invention." You girded up the "tempestuous rhetoric" with which the attack began and ended, and proceeded to defend the Irish Church, which might be a national Church without being universal. Government should be allied with



religion, or it becomes a mere police ; and a Church is a "bulwark at once against incredulity and fanaticism," and must be endowed. These apothegms dropped from your lips as if you had been a Professor of Exegetical Theology in the University of Göttingen. If endowment is opposed to the spirit of the age, "it will fall," you confessed ; but then you disbelieve that there is any such opposition, and you object to vague phrases. It was "the philosophers" who helped the advocates of disendowment, an alliance which you deprecated as unnatural. You were "in very gracious feeling" on the subject of philosophers. Dexterosly, and in your finest manner, you sought to show that to do justice in Ireland would be to undermine ecclesiastical foundations in England ; and you gave it out, amid sonorous cheers from your own side, that to "effect such a revolution" the Opposition must first obtain "leave from the country." The "immense beneficence" of endowments was not to be annihilated thus ; and it would be "indecent" in Parliament, without an appeal to the country, to deal with "such an enormous issue." Such a point must be settled by the new Parliament,—to which you looked forward, you said, with cheerful confidence,—and not by the present Parliament, which is near its end. But, for your own part, you declared yourself ardently for the principle of endowment. Here you took occasion to administer to the House of the Lords a little lesson on demeanor, in return for the comments on your moral character lately made. As to the speech quoted out of your own mouth against you on the occasion, you said, "Nobody listened to you at the time:" it bore upon it "the heedless rhetoric which is the appanage of speakers below the gangway." If the motion had been pressed, you said, you should have withstood it. You declared you would stand to the plan of a Charter for a Roman Catholic University ; you would legislate upon details of the land tenure, and issue a Commission of Inquiry ; and you would introduce an Irish Reform Bill at once. These things, you believed, would be found enough for the "crisis." After an explanation from Mr. BRIGHT, and the statement of Mr. MAGUIRE that "he was quite satisfied with the result of the debate,"—a sentiment which Liberal opinion will echo with renewed courage and vitality,—the long discussion ended on the morning of Tuesday last, the 16th current.

The great Irish debate was thus closed about two o'clock on last Tuesday morning with elaborate speeches from Mr. GLADSTONE as the leader of the Opposition, and from yourself, not only as the leader of the House of the Common men, but as the Prime Minister of the British Empire. Those two concluding addresses did not, indeed, alter the impression produced by the discussion of the three nights last week. Mr. GLADSTONE spoke for two hours. He appears to have made as complete an exposition of Irish policy as any statesman could be expected to give from the front bench of the Opposition side of the House of the Common men. He showed himself thoroughly in harmony with his party on all the great questions, and in condemnation of the Ministerial policy—if the discreditable make-shifts which Lord Mayo was put up to announce can be at all considered worthy of being called a policy. Some croakers had hinted that the leader of the Opposition was disposed to regard with favor the extraordinary proposition of the Government to originate for the Irish Catholics the most purely denominational university ever known ; and, while endowing it out of the funds of the State, to make no provision for State control. Mr.



GLADSTONE has given a signal contradiction to those predictions. It is surprising, indeed, that they should have been made, because it is certain that he had, during the last two Sessions, condemned any proposal for setting up rival universities at the expense of the State. He had expressly alluded last year to your alleged promise to The O'DONOGHUE, and condemned it by anticipation as an expedient which would lower the standard of education. It was to be expected that Mr. GLADSTONE should defend the Supplemental Charter, as a plan to reconcile the wishes of the Catholic hierarchy for denominational education with an institution which represented an essentially different principle. It is not worth while now to revive an old controversy. The Supplemental Charter is a thing of the past; and Mr. GLADSTONE himself shows no disposition to revive it. That men who are now on the Ministerial Benches should have condemned the concession of the Supplement Charter as injurious to mixed and non-sectarian education, and should afterwards themselves propose to originate new denominational institutions, of which the effect must be fatal, not merely to the principle of the Queen's University, but to the existence of the colleges themselves, is, indeed, most discreditable. Though Lord MAYO made some merit of having first developed the scheme for a Catholic University in the House of the Common men, it is well known that it had been the subject of negotiations with The O'DONOGHUE and other Catholic members. Your promise was deliberately made, and it has been sought as deliberately to carry it into effect. The mere statements of the scheme has, however, called forth so decided a condemnation of it from every part of the House of the Common men that I am not surprised that you have attempted to explain away some of its most extraordinary features. You have endeavored to maintain that, in asking the House of the Common men to find money for the building, professorships, scholarships, and prospective colleges of such a University, and in declaring openly that all State control of such an institution was to be abandoned as soon as it was fairly under weigh, the helm being given up to the hierarchy whose wishes it was sought to gratify, the Government were only proposing to do what had been done for the London University. The establishment of the London University is directly opposed in every conceivable point to the plan for the Catholic University, which you still, stoutly declare to be most practicable and unobjectionable. Your mistake has arisen from your constant habit of seeking to outbid your opponents. This has been your invariable practice from the commencement of your career. Even in 1832, you assured the Radicals that Lord GREY's Ministry had not been sufficiently liberal in the great measure which inaugurated a new era in our history. You considered yourself quite justifiable in proclaiming war to the knife against the Whigs as not Democratic enough, and in defending, at the same time, the rotten boroughs. This is what you meant by Tory Democracy. You signalized your first advancement to be a Protectionist leader in 1846 by a bid for the support of Mr. Smith O'Brien and the party of Young Irelanders that you and the Tories endeavored to make use of, to turn out the Government of Sir ROBERT PEEL. Two years ago, in resisting the seven-pound rental Suffrage of Lord RUSSELL and Mr. GLADSTONE, you declared yourself opposed to a lowering, and, as you called it, a "degradation," of the Franchise, and in favor of "lateral" Reform. Reformers learnt, however, last Session that lateral Reform meant Household Suffrage, and



that the Whigs had again not gone far enough. Thus, too, on this Irish University education question. You have cherished this proposal of an endowed Catholic University just as you cherished Household Suffrage as an instrument with which to turn the flank of Mr. GLADSTONE and the Liberals. What Household Suffrage was to the seven-pound rental Franchise, the plan for establishment of this new denominational university is to the Supplemental Charter. You would, as no person who is acquainted with your works can doubt, outbid your opponents on the Irish Church question as on other questions, if you dared. The convictions of your supporters, however, are on this point insurmountable. You cannot, as in inducing them to consent to Household Suffrage, appeal to the imagination, and promise that the abolition of such an institution will be for their general interests. Their strongest prejudices stand in the way. You are obliged, therefore, to talk some of the language of old Toryism. You taunt your opponents with not having dealt with the subject themselves. You might as well blame them for not having carried a Household Suffrage Reform Bill when they were in office. Can you realize the situation you are in? This is not a season for small expedients—for mere tricks. You now say that you have only been in power a few days; but you told us, on appearing in the House of the Common men for the first time as Prime Minister, that your Government was merely a continuation of Lord DERBY's, and that its policy would be the same. The exposition of Irish policy made by Lord MAXO on last Tuesday week was announced to be given more than a fortnight before, and it had been promised for more than a month. You cannot say that the Liberal party, since 1832, have ever defended the Irish Church. Their greatest writers and speakers have condemned it in the most emphatic manner. The circumstances with which we have now to deal are not what they were even four years ago. The Fenian organization, however contemptible it may be; the three years of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act; the judgment of foreign nations; the principles which are being acted upon throughout the civilized world, coinciding with the great extension of the Suffrage in the United Queendom oblige us to put our house in order. The history of the Irish Church question is like that of other great questions. The evil is acknowledged and deplored, but endured for a time. The Nation, however, suddenly awakes to the conviction that a bad institution or a bad system of government has become intolerable, and it is summarily swept away. The Catholic Emancipation Act was soon followed by the passing of the Reform Act of 1832, and now we find that a more considerable extension of the Franchise has precipitated the solution of the Irish Church question. Every Liberal will rejoice to learn that Mr. GLADSTONE's declaration on this point was most decided and unmistakable. On this Irish Church question he is prepared to do battle, and to do it at once. The issue is plain enough. Is religious equality in Ireland to be produced by universal endowment, or by a surrender of the unjust and untenable position of the Irish Establishment? You declare that you are in favor of new endowments; Mr. GLADSTONE of disestablishing the Irish Church, and certainly not of extending a system of endowments either to Protestants or Catholics. The decision of the House of the Common men will be at once challenged; but, whatever may be that decision, the final and speedy victory to the cause of Justice, equality, and religious freedom is not



doubtful. You may pretend to consider that religion and religious endowments are the same thing. The people may soon tell you that they are not the same; and that the one can exist and can flourish without the other.

Seldom has free, unfettered discussion in the House of the Common men produced so instant and signal a result as the Irish debate that closed on last Monday night, or rather at an early hour on Tuesday morning. Not the least remarkable of its characteristics lay in what was *not* said on the occasion. In London, Reformers had—to speak plainly—a grave impeachment of the Irish Church as a political nuisance, and not one English member rose to defend the Establishment; and even the Irish Protestants were feebly represented by Mr.—not “the great”—VANCE. When an institution some hundreds of years old is thus left without a word of decent apology, its doom is sealed; and that judgment is the great result of the week. Tories, as well as Liberals, feel that the last hour of that ancient iniquity has come; and the only question is, with what maimed rites and ceremonies the old offender is to be interred. Reformers may safely say that the policy of your Ministry will but hasten its decease: you simply use three weapons—obscurity, delay, and threats. Excepting that you declare generally for State Churches, I fail to make out what you mean. You tell us that “the status of the unendowed Churches of Ireland is to be altered,” but what you indicate I cannot discover. There is only *one* unendowed Church in Ireland—the Roman Catholic; and how is its “status” to be changed, and what does “status” mean? It does not mean “salaries to priests”—against any such scheme you declare. In regard to the Established Church, you obstinately refuse to say a word as to the diminution or diversion of its endowments; you postpone a statement of your policy, evidently hoping that “something may turn up.” You have another weapon—the menace of a dissolution. But as Prime Minister you greatly mistake if you think that the flourish of that State sword will awe the Liberal party from its appointed course. I must doubt whether you have the power or the daring to use it. You know as well as I do that your party does not command the confidence of the country. Every recent election has gone against the Tories; and the rural fiasco at Cambridge indicates the heavy blow and great discouragement occasioned by the surrender of last year. You also know that a dissolution just now would be more than inconvenient. The business of the House is much in arrear; the Chancellor of the Exchequer is in want of money; and while a sudden needless break-up of the London season would be unpopular with all kinds and conditions of men, the whole Nation would be exasperated by the wanton stoppage of legislative work at this peculiar juncture. There are times when a menace of the kind may be made with sincerity and effect, but now it is impotent, because idle. The policy of the Liberal party, therefore, must be shaped without regard to the menace. It is our business, in the first place, to extract from your Government its Irish Reform Bill and its Tenant Bill: we may take whatever is good in those measures as “an advance on account,” without in any way surrendering our claim to that payment in full which the Irish people now justly demand. And Mr. GLADSTONE’S declaration on the Irish Church sets forth the principles to which, through its leader, the Liberal party is now pledged. “That Church as a State Church must cease to exist.” We are to have no more Irish bishops



in the House of the Lords, no more Irish Protestant Bishops attending Privy Councils at the Castle, no more Protestant chaplains to the Lord Lieutenant—in short, no connection by way of patronage or responsibility between the Irish Protestant Church and the State. The next point is “religious equality in Ireland.” The third is, that while there shall be due regard to vested interests, there is to be no redistribution of the revenues of the Church in salaries and stipends to any priests,—Roman Catholic or otherwise. Mr. GLADSTONE did not exclude from consideration suggestions such as Mr. BRIGHT’s, for making a final grant of a certain sum to each of the three Churches ; but in the main his idea evidently is, that the time for compromise has passed, and that we must apply the axe to the root of that upas-tree of Protestant ascendancy which has inflicted such incalculable mischief upon Ireland and the Irish people. He pledged himself to bring the question before the House, and in doing so he distinctly disclaimed any idea of another Appropriation Clause with its mere declaration of principle : he promised a distinct plan that the country could estimate as a whole. By this straightforward proceeding the whole controversy will be clearly raised : the Liberal party will be rallied around a banner bearing a distinct battle-cry, and should you dare to challenge on the hustings the decision of Parliament, you will find that the Irish debate has been heard beyond the walls of Parliament, and has borne fruit, not only on members, but on constituents. There are, I do not doubt, many members of the Liberal party who would have preferred some honest plan of equivalent endowment for all sects to that disendowment which is now only a question of time. But those politicians are not opposed in principle to disendowment, and they have suggested the other plans as platforms, on which they could meet halfway, some of the calm, moderate friends of the Irish Establishment. That unfortunate Church, however, has no calm, moderate friends. Some curse seems to have clung to its ill-gotten gains. With few exceptions, the cause of the Church produces defenders who are so feeble that one is amazed at their bigotry, and so bigoted that one is astonished it does not supply them with some element of force. If the Irish Protestants had been Logical thinkers, even six months ago, a plan such as that advocated by Mr. HERBERT STACK might have been possible ; but Reformers are warned that public opinion has now passed beyond the stage of such solutions. Of your speech it is difficult to speak with befitting calmness ; it was a clever speech, based on a mere misconception—I will not call it misrepresentation. If Mr. BRIGHT had liberated his great mind on the general question of endowments, your Oration might have been a spicy and interesting retort ; or if you would print it in a tract, and distribute it by way of counter-check to the Liberation Society, I should read it with care, and criticize it with pleasure. What had it, however, to do with the debate ? Mr. BRIGHT denounced the Irish Church, not because it is established and endowed, but because it is, as it stands, a political insult to the Irish people ; whereupon you cry, “ People of England, this man is opposed to all endowments, and Mr. GLADSTONE agrees with him.” Thus, by attributing to Mr. BRIGHT what he did *not* say, and does not think, and by attributing to Mr. GLADSTONE a cordial concurrence in what Mr. BRIGHT did not say and does not think, you dreamed that you had made out a plausible case against the Opposition. Did you deceive a single member in the House ? Mr. BRIGHT has again and again declared, that in his opinion



the Church of England stands on a very different footing from the Irish Establishment, and not even yourself can doubt that Mr. GLADSTONE is devoted to his Church. Has Mr. BRIGHT denounced the endowed Church of Scotland? Never; and yet, because he points to a grave political wrong perpetrated in Ireland under the cloak of religion, you start up and defend that general principle of endowment which nobody has attacked. You might as well say that a man criticizing the distribution of our garrisons by the Horse Guards "impeaches the whole state and status of standing armies," or that to expose a waste of money at South Kensington "raises at once the delicate and debated question of the patronage that the Sovereign should afford to art." The device reminds me of FADLADEEN, who, before he could decide on the merits of a poem, said it was necessary to consider all the poems of the kind that had been previously produced. You may rest assured that the House of the Common men will not follow you into the very wide discussion you so cleverly,—too cleverly,—suggest. Nor are you overwise, even as a matter of party tactics, to attempt to raise the controversy. It might be all very well to make "Endowments" an election cry, but what if the electors add the words "No Popery," and thus spoil the game? But you now say that you still approve of the sentiment expressed in your speech of 1844, with its declaration for "ecclesiastical equality;" in that case you must mean that the Roman Catholic Church is to be raised by endowments to a level with the Protestant Church. Is that a programme for the hustings? Is a new burthen on the British taxpayer, for the sake of a new Irish Church,—and *that* Church Roman Catholic,—is that splendid boon to be the first gift of your Administration to the Protestant taxpayers of Great Britain?

That the great debate on the causes of the condition of Ireland which has engrossed so much of the attention of Parliament will *lead to any immediate measures of practical utility* to the Irish people, is obviously most improbable; but still it will have produced results of very considerable importance. In the first place, it will probably have seriously damaged the position of your Government. Your Cabinet has shown itself without a policy in Ireland. Its only policy is a policy of ignorance. It has no views in particular about Irish land or the Irish State Church, and it will wait till it is enlightened. Now, there were two lines which your Government might have taken, either of which would have been tolerably creditable to you. How easily you could have said that the Ministry considered the questions raised in the numerous recent discussions about Ireland too vast and grave for a moribund Parliament, that you would not anticipate the decisions of a future Parliament, and that all you could and would do to anticipate and aid the inquiries of that Parliament was to collect information on various heads, which was sure at once to be useful in its proper time. You might have boldly said that there was no inevitable occasion whatever for legislating for Ireland this year in a hurry and in a panic; and that you were prepared to take the sense of the House of the Common men on this one issue. If you had done this, you would certainly have shown courage and confidence in yourselves, and have gained in general esteem, and such a course would, I believe, have commended itself to the present House of the Common men. But you did not take this course. You stated, on the contrary, that you had a distinct policy about Ireland, which you were prepared to reveal in a solemn way at an appointed hour. The hour and the man arrived on



Tuesday, the 10th of March, 1868, and the *artificial noble, nick-named*, Lord Mayo, disclosed the mysterious secret. He unfolded the Irish policy of your Government, which I have already very slightly reviewed. And here I may now pause to remark that there was a second course which your Government might have adopted with, at least, perfect consistency. You might have metaphysically defended the existing state of things. It was to this conclusion that the whole of Lord Mayo's speech led up. But this would have been bare-faced Toryism, and of all things that your Ministry most dreads, there is nothing so bad in your eyes as to be thought Tory. On every point you and your Colleagues talk a sort of set Tory jargon in order to please your own party, and then give up finally, by a sort of side-wind, all the principles on which Toryism rests. If the existing law of Soil-Lord and tenant works perfectly well in Ireland, which was what Lord Mayo attempted to show, what justification can there be for the little, peddling, uncertain, vague changes in it, which he proposed and promised to introduce when he can but see how they can be drafted? If you and your Colleagues think the Irish State Church a good thing, or a thing which, whether good or bad in itself, must, from considerations of Tory honor or Tory policy, be resolutely supported—Why do you not boldly say so? The cause is very obvious, because to do this would be to destroy the character of your Government as being "*truly liberal*." The policy of your Government about Ireland is really this:—"*As to the land, everything is right as it stands, and the law of Soil-Lord and tenant, which is virtually the same as that of England and Scotland on the subject, is perfectly just, and works perfectly well; but, as we confess our general ignorance on this and other subjects, we propose to make considerable changes in it, and establish considerable differences between the English and the Irish law; and we hope we shall very soon think out what these changes shall be. As to the Established Church, we do not know whether it is a good thing or a bad, or whether it has got too much money or too little; but we believe it to be an institution so beneficial, and one which England is so deeply pledged in honor to maintain, that we will maintain it at all hazards until some one can show us a convenient, practicable, and popular mode of abolishing it.*" This is what your Government calls its Irish policy, and although the sentiments are not such as to call for any particular blame or adverse criticism, being the sentiments which "*truly liberal*" Tories are most likely to entertain, yet it is not only absurd, but most damaging to your Government, to parade them as a policy. One piece of policy quite your own you did, however, offer. You had a special proposal to make,—a boon you were willing to offer to Ireland. You proposed not only to give a Charter, but an endowment to a new Catholic University. Mr. Lowe expressed what will be the general feeling when he said that this proposal must be taken as nothing more than a firework sent up with a splash and a whiz, to look fine for a moment, and then end in smoke and obscurity. But a Government that can think of nothing specially its own, except letting off a rocket of this sort, is a very poor Government. In any other year but this I should confidently add that it was a doomed Government, but this is an exceptional time, and considerations of political convenience will probably induce Parliament to let your Ministry linger on. In the second place, no one can fail to see that the debate has been most damaging to the Irish State Church. Its political position has been completely altered, and how great this alteration has been is obvious, if critics carefully compare the way in



which it has been attacked with the way in which it has been defended. The days of an institution are over which, when attacked as Mr. LOWE attacked the Irish State Church, is defended as Mr. HARDY defended it. All that Mr. HARDY had really to say for it was, that he thought he should make out a case against the Liberals with regard to the way they had treated it. The Liberals may acknowledge that he succeeded. *“The difficulties that would baffle the present Ministry, if they tried to deal with the Irish State Church, have baffled a long series of Ministries before. Lord Russell’s sudden feverish interest in the Irish Church is a mere partizan move. His scheme is a scheme which has found no supporters. A mere general denunciation of the Irish Church, without any idea of what to do with it, would be calculated to rouse a new and probably dangerous excitement in Ireland.”* All this may be very true, and if to cast reproach on the Whigs was all that was necessary, it would not be altogether ineffectual. But it has nothing to do with the real position of the Irish Church. Exactly the same arguments were used about Reform: it was difficult, it was taken up and let drop as the Whigs thought would best suit them; and so forth. But a Reform Bill was carried, because it was felt that the time had come to deal with Reform, and because the Tories, with the exception of an isolated politician or two like Mr. LOWE and Lord CRANBORNE, had no courage to defend that which existed. It is the same now with the Irish State Church. British statesmen have tried honestly and earnestly to ask themselves whether there is still anything in their Government of Ireland which is not quite fair, not quite what they would themselves like and tolerate. The only thing in which so many minds, and so many different minds, seem increasingly disposed to agree, is in disliking the maintenance of a Church which is the Church of a very small minority, as an Established Church. This is the new, and, as I believe, the fatal danger to the Irish State Church. For some cause, or set of causes, into which I need not now inquire, British statesmen have, as a matter of fact, examined their whole relations to Ireland in a new spirit and with a new interest, and they have persuaded themselves that the maintenance of the Church of the minority as an Established Church cannot be justified. It is because you do not recognize this, or because, recognizing it, you are too much afraid of your own supporters to own that you recognize it, that your Ministry in the debate on Ireland has seemed so far out of harmony with the state of public feeling which now prevails throughout Britain.

You bewailed, with some apparent ground of justification, your hard fate in that before you had been a week in office, the vast long-standing Irish question was thrust on you, and was made specially yours, and you were called on to settle it. What you meant was, that *“the Irish question,”*—as you frankly expressed it in a later part of your speech,—*“is an artificial question altogether, got up by Mr. GLADSTONE for his own advantage.”* Now, this is part of the great mistake into which you have fallen, on your entrance into a new phase of public life, that you should believe that the Irish question is no question at all, and that Mr. GLADSTONE, or any other adroit opponent, could have got it up. It is very annoying, and, in a certain sense, hard on your Ministry that, all of a sudden, the attention of Britain should be set on Ireland; but as it happens to be so set, it is very poor policy to pretend to think lightly of an occasion that every one outside your Ministry thinks very grave. Fenianism has been in a great measure the cause of this sudden turning of men’s



thoughts to Ireland, but Fenianism would have no effect whatever, if, when it forced British statesmen and Reformers to think of Ireland, it had not seemed to them that there was much matter for anxious reflection, and that changes must be made in the policy of England towards Ireland which honest men cannot be easy without trying to get made. It is exactly as it was with Reform. Mr. BEALES and his friends, and the mob that pulled down the railings, were considered by the Tories as contemptible as Fenianism, but they were very powerful agents in getting the Reform Bill passed, because when they made men previously passive, or ignorant, or obstinate, think about Reform, they saw that the arguments for Reform could not be further resisted. For four long nights the House of the Common men has discussed the causes of the condition of Ireland, and the general result is that Parliament has decided that there is something wrong in the state of Ireland which comes within the duty and power of the Imperial Legislature to remedy. A Statesman would have recognized the growth and the justice of the feeling, and would have tried to direct, to modify, and to utilize it. It is hard on you that, when other Prime Ministers have gone on for years without being found out, you should have been so unlucky as to have had your statesmanship tested at the very outset of your tenure of office. Of the mode in which your Ministry have, in fact, dealt with the great question brought before them it is impossible to speak too strongly. First of all you declared that you had a great policy as regards Ireland; then you had to confess that this policy lay in a Bill about land, something like a Bill which Lord MAYO failed to pass, and in endowing a Catholic University and leveling up, by which every one in the House understood,—and, I believe, was meant to be understood,—the general endowment of the Catholic clergy. Quailing before the contempt and indignation this latter proposal elicited, you very soon threw over Lord MAYO, as you used to throw over your nine-pins last Session. You still, indeed, talk mysteriously of making provision for the Catholic priests, which is not to consist in paying; but you fall back on the Tory party, and the old Tory policy of keeping up the Irish Established Church as an emblem of Tory ascendancy, and, as what its admirers term, the best garrison of Ireland. You have been driven to this by Mr. GLADSTONE, for you had not nerve or statesmanship enough to lead the movement for a new Liberal policy towards Ireland, nor could you be sure of your own party if you had made the attempt. In order, therefore, to have a position which you could call your own, and could give you a tenable basis in a party fight, you suddenly determined to resist the movement altogether. You appealed to the convictions and interests of the English clergy, and to the partizan fervor of the Irish Protestants. As a leader of a party you were right. If you were not to act the part of a statesman, and overawe your followers by bidding them follow the voice of the Nation, the best thing you could do was to consolidate your party, and settle yourself firmly in the leadership of it, by appealing to its old Tory traditions and beliefs. As the head of the party opposed to concessions to the Irish Roman Catholics at the expense of the Church Establishment, you immediately occupy a position of great strength and importance. You cease virtually, however, to be the Prime Minister of Britain, but you become a very powerful leader of Opposition to the progress of the application of Justice. Any proposal to deal with the Irish State Church will be sure to awake much jealousy, bigotry, and



suspicion ; and no one knows better than you do how to take advantage of this, and make it an instrument of discomfiture to your adversaries. And no one who is convinced that the Irish State Church must go and ought to go, but who realizes all the practical difficulties that have to be encountered, can fail to perceive how many opportunities for attack will be given by Mr. GLADSTONE if he has to carry such a proposal in face of your Opposition. That Mr. GLADSTONE should have spoken out plainly on the question of the Irish Church Establishment was most desirable. It would have been probably better if the question of the Irish State Church had been remitted to a new Parliament, and Mr. GLADSTONE had not in any way dealt with it until he could deal with it as the Prime Minister of Britain. But the great blunders of your Ministry rendered this impossible. After the revelation of what Lord MAYO called his policy, it was quite necessary that the leader of the Liberal party should show distinctly that he has a policy of his own,—a policy that he could call on his followers to support, and the Nation to approve. It may be fairly urged, however, that Mr. GLADSTONE ought to have given grounds for his new convictions ; but, as he has arrived at them, if he had not spoken on the last night of the debate so as to make his party feel that they could rely on him as a leader, the days of his leadership would have been over. There is no blame whatever to be attached to him, therefore, for taking a strong line about the Irish State Church. On the contrary, Reformers are very glad to get back to an era in politics when men think what they have got to say, and then say boldly what they mean. And even though it should be urged as a reproach to him that he says now what he has never said so strongly or so plainly before, it may be replied that he never spoke as he spoke on the last night of the Irish debate, because, probably, he had not himself advanced so far until he felt himself impelled by the force of a general movement, and still more because it would have been useless to have stirred the subject before public opinion throughout the entire Nation was ripe enough to give him the probability of success. The time had come on Monday night, the 16th of March, 1868, and he only said what it was quite necessary he should say, as a leader of his party, and as a statesman properly aspiring to guide the action of the Nation. But it was a very different thing to give notice of a regular Reforming move as a formal Resolution on the Irish State Church. This Resolution can do no more than enable him to win a temporary triumph over your Ministry, which, even if he wins it, will it is to be feared, seriously add to the great difficulties he will have to encounter when he comes to lay a proposal for dealing with the Irish State Church before Parliament, as the Prime Minister of Britain. That before very long some proposal of the sort will not only be submitted to Parliament, but adopted by it, I do not doubt ; and the Liberal party may probably be brought to unite on this question, and any point to which the Liberal party firmly and seriously adheres is sure to be carried in time. No mistakes which Mr. GLADSTONE or any one else can make can save much longer a religious institution for which its friends have nothing to say except that it is a good sort of political garrison. But all religious controversies are bitter, and the controversies which the coming fate of the Irish State Church will evoke will be especially bitter, because they affect the private fortunes of so many individuals. It was, therefore, especially important to approach the subject of the Irish Church Establish-



ment in a calm conciliatory way; and, above all things to avoid the imputation that a sudden desire to abolish it was not inspired by the love of Justice, or of Ireland, but by a paltry partizan ambition. It is the opinion of many Reformers that,—“If Mr. GLADSTONE had merely uttered a strong declaration of his views on the last night of debate, and taken occasion to renew and amplify this declaration, and given some general indication of his views on the Irish Church when the question of Chartering and endowing the Catholic Universities is brought on, he would have been in a better position than he will be if the Resolution is carried. To have dealt gently with the English clergy, and to have convinced them slowly that they must look to the general good of the Empire, and to have suggested to them that, after all, it cannot be good policy to insist that a sound constitution shall be bound up with a rotten one, would have been wiser than to provoke alarm, and irritate them, by bringing forward a Resolution.” Strange to say, “*in prudence, in the readiness to conciliate, in a combination of earnestness and breadth of view, Mr. GLADSTONE was, in this Irish debate,*” according to the expressed opinion of the same Reformers, “*far surpassed by Mr. BRIGHT.*” You, with a worse case in your hands, often win party victories over Mr. GLADSTONE, but you find Mr. BRIGHT far more difficult to deal with. Mr. BRIGHT’s land scheme occupied only a comparatively small portion of his speech; and although he has not, as yet, removed some of the practical objections that may be made to some parts of it, he has shown that, if it would do any good at all, its mode of working would not be revolutionary. But it was the general tone of his speech, the noble feelings it indicated, and the amount of reflection which was apparent in it, that gave it its air of superiority. Above all, it showed that Mr. BRIGHT is capable of making an honest attempt to understand and consider the position, views, and interests of persons with whom he disagrees. It will be curious, but it is by no means improbable, that when the next Liberal Ministry is formed,—which, to deserve the name, must now include Mr. BRIGHT,—it will find in Mr. BRIGHT’s disposition to look on great questions as questions for the people and the Empire, a counterbalance that will be much needed against Mr. GLADSTONE’s burning wish to engage in party fights, and his tendency to see in certain public questions a battle-ground where he may try his intellectual strength against a political opponent.

Whatever may have been the case once, Ireland can certainly no longer complain of being neglected. Her grievances, her sufferings, her claims too long denied, her attractions too much ignored, constitute the topic of the day. All the eloquence and statesmanship of the British Parliament have been for a week engaged in discussing how her wants are to be satisfied, her wounds to be healed, her people rendered happy and prosperous, and the twin curses of misery and disaffection banished from her shores. On to-morrow evening, there will be a further variation on the same theme; for the Irish Reform Bill, although it may provoke the strongest and most diverse criticism, is in itself simply another contribution to those measures for benefiting Ireland which the Government will propose and the Legislature discuss. But while the Senate of the Nation thus proclaims its desire to make amends for a wasted past, Royalty also steps forward to take its share in the performance of a gracious and beneficent duty. The appearance of the Prince of WALES as Chairman at the annual dinner of the



Benevolent Society of ST. PATRICK\* would at any time have been a pleasing event, and especially to the adorers of State Idols; but on the present occasion it has a far deeper significance than an act of mere patronage to a deserving charity. It must be taken in conjunction with his approaching visit to Dublin, as a proof of that goodwill towards Ireland which is entertained by those whose high social position gives them great power. Though, with respect to political matters, the practice of a constitutional State like ours imposes reserve on the Sovereign, a Prince of the real Blood Royal is not debarred from all interference in public affairs, and I for one welcome the legitimate influence which may be properly wielded by the eldest son of the good Lady the Queen of Britain. That veneration which a noble name, a historic lineage, and the prospects of a brilliant future will generally excite, may be turned to beneficent uses even with us practical politicians, who can occasionally relish the sunshine of Royal smiles, the grace of kindly spoken words, the free dispensation of Queenly *largesse*; but in Ireland personal influence exercises a much greater sway than in any other part of the QUEENDOM. There "the divinity that doth hedge a King" or a Queen challenges all respect; the sovereign is the great fountain of favors as well as of honors; the Throne symbolizes open-handed bounty not less than Imperial strength. Since, therefore, the Prince of WALES, as the representative of his Royal mother, and as the individual who will one day occupy the British Throne, has

\*SOCIETY OF ST. PATRICK.—LONDON, TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 1868.—Last night, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales presided at the eighty-fifth anniversary festival of the Benevolent Society of St. Patrick, at Willis's Rooms. Amongst those present were the Archbishop of Armagh, the Bishop of Derry, the Marquis of Clanricarde, the Earl of Cork, the Earl of Darnley, the Earl of Devon, the Earl of Clanwilliam, the Earl of Arran, the Earl of Erne, the Earl of Kimberley, Lord Longford, the Earl of Mayo, Viscount Hawarden, Viscount Lifford, Lord Dufferin, Viscount Hamilton, Lord Claud Hamilton, Right Hon. T. L. Corry, First Lord of the Admiralty; Mr. C. Fortescue, M.P.; the Right Hon. James A. Lawson, M.P.; Major-General Dunne, M.P.; and the Attorney-General for Ireland. The Archbishop of Armagh, in proposing "The health of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales and other members of the Royal Family," expressed a hope that on an early day her Royal Highness would be so far restored to vigorous health as to be able to pay a visit to the Emerald Isle. He was quite sure that she would there receive a welcome not less generous and cordial than that which had been accorded to her on her arrival on the shores of England. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, in reply, said that the Princess was intensely anxious to visit Ireland, and he was always looking forward to the time when the Princess and himself could together make a journey through the sister country. In response to the toast of "The Army and Navy and Volunteers," the First Lord of the Admiralty said that a contingent of the Channel Fleet would accompany his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on his approaching visit to Ireland, and would (weather permitting) be anchored in Dublin Bay whilst the Prince of Wales was the guest of the Lord Lieutenant. In proposing the toast of the evening—"Success and Prosperity to the Benevolent Society of St. Patrick"—his Royal Highness stated that one of the first patrons of the institution was his grandfather, the Duke of Kent. Having enumerated the objects and sketched the progress of the society, his Royal Highness said that the festival at which he had the honor to preside that evening might be regarded as a national re-union, where Irishmen of all shades of politics might meet together for the promotion of their mutual interests without political allusions or the exhibition of religious predilections. The Earl of Mayo, in responding to the toast of "Prosperity to Ireland," said that there was never a time at which all classes of the community entertained a more sincere, ardent, and intense desire to promote the interests of the sister island. He assured those whom he had the honor to address, that his Royal Highness, on his approaching visit, would receive a most enthusiastic welcome from the people of Ireland. The proceedings throughout were of the most interesting and harmonious character.



come forward to express his personal liking for the Irish people, his admiration of their country, and his wish to know them better, he will meet with no faint or grudging welcome. ST. PATRICK'S Day at Willis's Rooms, with a Royal Prince in the chair, and a splendid banquet in the foreground, with guests, children, uniforms, speeches, and music racy of the soil, is a sight to gratify all patriotic Irishmen. But the brilliant spectacle on Tuesday evening only faintly foreshadows what next month will witness in the capital of the Emerald Isle. The first announcement of the Prince's intended visit excited an enthusiasm on this side of St. George's Channel which showed how deep-seated and genuine is the sentiment of loyalty in Irish Brains, and how easily the affections of those Brains may be won, notwithstanding a passing estrangement. The accounts which every day sends from Ireland must prove that it is not only the familiar gala sights of Dublin which will await the Prince of WALES; he will witness a grander spectacle in the rejoicing of a people who are to keep holiday in his honor. The programme which has been arranged from Easter Tuesday onwards, is certainly as attractive as the most devoted sightseer can desire. What with a squadron of ironclads in Dublin Bay, awaking with their tremendous salvoes loud echoes from the Wicklow Mountains, what with a State procession to the Castle, visits to the Punchestown Races and romantic Powerscourt, reviews in the world-renowned Fifteen Acres, stately ceremonials in St. Patrick's Cathedral, flower-shows, addresses, balls, and suppers *galore*, and no doubt a colossal bonfire on the Hill of Howth, the joyous hosts will have a happy time of it in heaping up welcomes for their illustrious guest. Will any one sneer at these gay doings as worthy only of children, as so many glittering shams, the mere surface-sparkle of popular excitement, which will pass away and leave no trace? I must answer, that the festive celebrations will be redeemed from all touch of triviality by the genuine enthusiasm which will inspire them. The people of Dublin dearly love a brilliant show; but they know very well that the sights of next month will be resplendent, not so much for what they are in themselves as for what they symbolize. They are the frontispiece to a new chapter in Irish history; and the long and weary tale of disaffection, misery, and injustice will be eclipsed by the first pages that commence the happier annals inaugurated by the Royal presence. The people of Ireland have been told lately, with an earnestness which they cannot possibly mistake, that the Parliament of the Empire has determined to redress their wrongs. But the complaints which are sent from Ireland to England refer not merely to material grievances; they also include the wounded sentiment that is born of unmerited neglect. To neither are *developed Statesmen* now indifferent. The debate which closed on last Monday night affords ample proof that such evils as can be cured by legislation will not be permitted to exist much longer, and the rankling sense of inferiority, of being kept subordinate to other portions of the Queendom, of languishing, as it were, in the shade while happier districts bask in the sunshine of Royal favor, will, I hope, be effectually removed by a visit that may end in transforming a Prince of the true Royal Blue Blood from a casual traveler to a resident and neighbor. All the circumstances, then, attending the journey of the Prince of WALES to Dublin, and the plain intimation conveyed in his own language at the banquet on Tuesday, the 17th current, lead us to anticipate that Ireland will henceforth be treated, not as a remote and



scarcely accessible part of the QUEEN'S dominions, but as an integral portion, to become not less familiar than England to those who stand near the Throne. The happy effects of such a change are more likely to be under-estimated than to be exaggerated. The frequent residence of a member of the Royal family in Ireland would have a healing influence on faction itself ; so long as the people must have *expensive* State Idols to adore and worship. The Viceroy is necessarily the representative of a party or a faction ; although Lord ABERCORN has won the esteem and regard of all parties, by his public spirit, his dignified frankness, and his geniality, he would himself be the first to acknowledge that he cannot give to the people that which they have craved, the countenance of Royalty itself. From all taint of partizanship, however, a Prince of the Royal House is supposed to be wholly free. He is above the schemings of time-serving politicians or the hatreds of rival sects, and in his presence the most envenomed opponents may meet as on neutral ground. The Archbishop of DUBLIN and Cardinal CULLEN can alike stand, without the fear of having wrong motives imputed to either, before the Son of that Sovereign who claims allegiance from them all. If the visit were only an isolated act of State policy, such gratifying influences might be too short-lived to have any permanent effect ; but the important distinction between the present and previous cases is, that it introduces a complete change of practice. The Prince of WALES, at the banquet on Tuesday, expressed in warm terms his affection for the country, and his resolution to befriend it. "If," he said, "this visit should tend to give pleasure to the people of Ireland, I hope there may be a longer visit hereafter." That the new course will be carried out systematically I can fully believe. That the Prince will steer clear of those quicksands which in a country where party spirit runs so high, are at hand to engulf the unwary, his conduct hitherto forbids me to doubt. In the meantime, I am content to leave the rest to the generous enthusiasm of the Irish people themselves, whose impressionable natures will eagerly respond to the frank courtesy displayed by the heir to the British Crown. Whether a general amnesty for political offences were to be announced or not would not much matter. Fenianism would be disarmed of all power for mischief from the very moment that the son of the British Sovereign applied himself to the task of winning the affections of her subjects in this island, by the resistless influences of soothing sympathy and considerate kindness.

I should be the last to pretend that Royal visits, however gracious or often repeated, could in the least degree supply the place of Justice to the Irish ; yet I am heartily glad to learn that in all probability the Princess of WALES will accompany the Prince, her husband, to Ireland. Let Reformers not be mistaken for a moment ; this determination, I repeat, full of kindness and meaning as it is, has no bearing upon the necessity to pass those laws which Ireland wants, and to relieve her from the ancient tyrannies which wither her prosperity and oppress her conscience. It is rather because the Princess will go as a fair and illustrious ambassadress from the English people, that the resolve is welcome. To some races of men it would be labor lost to say such a thing, or to give the grounds why I hope for the best results from this apparently simple act of Royal courtesy and interest. But of all races in the world the Irish people are the least likely to miss the inner sentiment contained in a piece of grateful good feeling. They



do not belong to the dull stolid breeds of mankind who cannot extract from a little sign of perfect friendship large and pleasant conclusions. Theirs is the country *par excellence* of gallantry and of a chivalrous estimate, of bright eyes and warm feminine affections—a country where a lady's smile passes as current as gold, and lights up PADDY's mind like Summer sunshine. If he was gratified at all, therefore, to know that the QUEEN's son would soon be coming over to stay in Ireland a little, and to see for himself her hopes and sorrows, her smiles and tears, the Irishman will be still better pleased to hear that this "jewel of a Princess" is to bear the Heir of the British Crown company. I should not presume to tell a master in the soft art of "sootherin" like PADDY, what such a visit is to mean. Nobody has affections which beat so quickly to the true voice of kindness, or which is so ready to soften when mild and beautiful eyes look upon him and wish him well out of all his "trouble." That is what the Princess will go to do, though it need not be said in so many words. She will not pretend that she has any direct authority over the lawmakers, or that the balls, reviews, and "purty ginerall doings," consequent upon her arrival, will turn all the Irish bogs green with barley, or make the butter come sooner in the Kerry churns. But she does know that kind thoughts count for a good deal with Irishmen, and that they have their own part and power even in the affairs of nations. She is quite right in thinking that Ireland will take this visit exactly as it is meant, and be glad to see a face which, in its brightness and goodwill, is an omen to the land, I hope, of the days that are to come, when the black and bitter days shall be quite forgotten. And though I would not for a moment exaggerate the effect of Royal visits, yet it seems to me that there is quite a new and most noble function indicated here for Queens and Princesses. They are, in the affairs of life, like poetry as compared with prose—like music as compared with plain speech. They can say or imply gracious things which Kings or Princes cannot, without the impeachment of masculine traditions and etiquettes. We can show our goodwill to a friend by giving him a flower; and in the Royal demonstration of goodwill, the Princess is like the flower; for her presence means so much that everybody can understand, and conveys the meaning in such a pleasant and welcome manner. There never probably was a greater blunder made in the world's history than in the establishment of a Salic law. That a gallant and spirited Nation like the French should have adopted it only shows how much the genius of a people may be thwarted by the errors of their rulers. The evidence is almost all against the principle. Monarchies usually prosper most when a woman wears the diadem. It was a MARIA THERESA who evoked the patriotism of Hungary as if by magic, a CATHARINE the Great who completed Russia, a Queen of SHEBA who introduced the worship of the "one God" to Africa. The British people have never had better times than under their Queens: the reigns of ELIZABETH, of ANNE, and of VICTORIA are bright Oases of British annals. If I were not afraid of Mr. Attorney-General and of a process for "misprision of treason," I should be almost inclined to recommend a reversal of the Salic law in this realm, and in all others which have similar institutions, so that the throne might always be occupied by a female Sovereign. For it is very obvious that the feeling of loyalty is far more natural—that the stiff knees of men bend far more pleasantly—when the sovereignty of the sex is added to the sovereignty of the scepter. If the Irish



are a little sore and angry at the long delays of justice, they cannot and will not refuse the warmest welcome to their Princess. "The sound of her foot," one of their songs runs, "said a hundred swate things;" and merely by landing on the shores of Erin, her Royal Highness can put into gentle smiles, and the grace of her good and pleasant countenance, messages which even you—our Literary Prime Minister—might bite your pen for a month before you could get neatly printed in the preamble of a bill, or the Speech at the opening of Parliament. I anticipate for the Princess ALEXANDRA a new conquest of the country, which, by its brilliant rapidity, will help us all to forget STRONGBOW and CROMWELL, and the other sad reminiscences. A gentler task or a more worthy no Royal lady ever undertook, and none has been, by her virtues and good name, more qualified to undertake the mission. If the Princess be enabled to undertake the journey, she will in reality have entered the diplomatic service, and she will go as the envoy of British goodwill to the Irish people. "Her Excellency" the Princess would take to Dublin the message of a fixed intention on the part of Britain to make firm and lasting peace with Ireland. She would not exactly say so; for, again, to quote a national lyric, "why should she be throubled with hard spellin' in the matter, when the m'aning was so plain that 'twas said by half a smile?" "Her Excellency" would go at a time when the light of great hopes and of perfect justice is breaking like a true "sunburst" over the Green Island, and when the foremost statesman in Britain declares by word and deed that "justice delayed is justice denied." Here, therefore, would be an earnest message of concord and goodwill, sent by the highest and gentlest ambassador that could possibly take it. It is a thousand pities that TOM MOORE can't be spared a little while from Elysium to write us an "Irish melody" that might do musical justice to the occasion. However, his affectionate and gallant countrymen would do justice to the event, and would, without the least taint of servility, render to the fair conqueror the full tribute of spontaneous gratitude. For the future, when politicians go over the list of Irish Reformers, beyond question they should have to include—and high up, too, in the patriotic catalogue—the name of our gentle British Princess, who traveled by sea and land to say for us, in a language which all Ireland learns to comprehend, from the violet eyes and sweet faces of its own daughters, the errand of goodwill and the message of kindly purposes.

Before I conclude the present lengthy letter, I claim, in the responsible capacity of your *Voluntary and Unpaid Political* EDUCATOR, the right, urgently to press the question on your attention:—"What are, apparently, the principal results of the late great Irish Debate"?

One result of the great Irish debate is, that the Irish Church shall be ultimately disestablished. This is announced most emphatically by the *Times*, which cannot be considered a purely Liberal organ, devoted to Mr. GLADSTONE and his party. That journal has generally taken up a position independent of both the Tory and Liberal connexions, sometimes leaning to one and then to the other, and during the last two years far more favorable personally to you than to Mr. GLADSTONE. It is, however, the *Times* that, to the dismay of the Tories, tells them the disestablishment of the Irish Church "is as certain as any event can be that has not yet come to pass." They were just as surprised in 1846 when that journal announced, after Sir ROBERT PEEL's conversion to the principles of Free Trade, and his determination to give effect to



this policy, that "the Corn Laws were done for." Protectionists rushed about in 1846 assuring one another that the repeal of the Corn Laws would not take place; but the Corn Laws were really "done for" then; and, attempt to deny the truth as the Irish Tories now may, the Established Church in Ireland is "done for." Reformers have but to look at the arguments used in its defence by yourself, and you are, as no person would think of denying, a very clever and dexterous man of your kind—to be convinced that the Establishment in this country cannot be maintained. "There is no person," writes the *Times*, "better assured of this than Mr. Disraeli." His speech fully confirms this statement. He did not attempt for one moment to defend the Establishment on its merits. But in these days, a Church that cannot be defended on its merits cannot be defended at all. The man who, in 1844, declared the Establishment to be an alien Church, and who, in seeking to do away with some of the effects of what he said, could not, last Monday, but admit on his "historical conscience," that the observations were just, is scarcely in a position to make a good defence of this old, but not venerable, institution. What is, according to your conception, the ideal of a national Church, and how does the Irish Establishment correspond with this ideal? You do not trouble yourself with the doctrines which a national Church may profess to teach. That you consider to be a question of no moment. "The condition," you said, "in which I should wish to see a national Church would be this—that the whole population of the country should be in communion with it." It follows, plainly enough, from these words that a national Church, with which not one-half nor one-tenth of the people of Ireland is really in communion, is not in the condition in which even you would wish to see a national Church. Such a Church, after a trial of three hundred years, is, in fact, self-condemned. According to your own principle, it logically follows that the Church of a very small minority ought not to be the national Church. It may be set up as an Establishment; it may be called "national;" but it establishes nothing but its own injustice, and to the title of national it can have no warrantable pretensions. Had the policy which Lord Mayo announced been at all acceptable, it is probable that British public opinion would not have pronounced itself so decidedly for the removal of the Irish Establishment. When, however, it became manifest that your Ministry had really no intention of grappling with any acknowledged grievance, and that your sole object was to perpetuate the existence of the Establishment by prodigal bounties to other Churches out of the public purse, the very revulsion of public feeling which was excited by the proposed establishment of a Catholic University, the increase of the *Regium Donum* grant, and the implied endowment of the Catholic Church on the principle of equality, led by a natural process to the consideration whether the Irish Establishment, as a State Church, was worth preserving under such conditions. When this issue was fairly presented, the great body of the intelligent classes appears to have come with a suddenness which has caused some surprise, to the conclusion that it was better to take away the exceptional privileges of the Establishment in Ireland, and to leave all Churches thus on a common level, instead of engaging in the hopeless and prodigal task of raising other Churches to the elevation of the State Church. Your speech was partly an attempt to explain away some of Lord Mayo's proposals. The result was that you rendered your hearers



more perplexed than they were before. It became quite evident that the Ministers knew not what they were doing ; that they contradicted themselves and each other ; and, as legislators for Ireland, were quite unworthy of public confidence. No proposal was more explicit than that of the Chief-Secretary, to establish a Catholic University with money of the State for a building, professors, scholarships, and even prospective colleges. Lord MAYO's words are on record. You, however, boldly denied on Monday night, the 16th current, that anything had been said about an endowment. According to your idea, the thing was a mere "fleabite,"—some eight thousand a year or so,—such as the London University received, but nothing more. The only certain features in your policy are the recklessness with which schemes are brought forward, the suddenness with which they are withdrawn, and the audacity with which the ordinary meaning of plain words is denied. After all that Lord MAYO had said, you left it to be understood that you would be satisfied with the grant of a charter to the Catholic University, and that with regard to any endowment, the House might take what course it pleased. You were, however, openly defending "the principle of endowments." You declared yourself on the side of endowment, just as you had formerly announced yourself on the side of the angels. There can be no question that Lord MAYO's proposal for an endowed denominational university, and his hint of an increase of the *Regium Donum*, with his acknowledgment that religious equality must somehow or other be produced in Ireland, did bring up the whole question of endowments for religious purposes in this country. But it is ridiculous to maintain that the principle of all religious endowments is involved in the maintenance of the Irish Establishment as the State Church. The most sincere supporters of the Church of England, and of the principle of endowments, in a country where there may not be very decided religious divisions, can most logically and conscientiously disapprove of the Irish Establishment. After you had, with your usual wearisome reiteration, endeavored to persuade your audience that in defending the Establishment you were defending all endowments and the "principle of religion itself," you intimated before you concluded your speech, that there must be some great change in the condition of the Irish Catholic clergy, but not on the principle of endowments. "I believe," you said, "that the time is fast approaching when there must be a great change in the status of the unendowed clergy ; but I am not in favor of paying the Irish priests." People have since been asking what you could mean. You refused to say, declaring that you were, at least, as explicit as your opponents, and forgetting that you and your colleagues, as Ministers, were supposed to be announcing a policy. All that is clear, amid such a wilderness of contradiction, is that your, our new Prime Minister's Irish policy has been unequivocally condemned, and that you know not what to do, but gratify your uncompromising Tory supporters by maintaining the Irish Church at any cost. You are driven with the Church you undertake to defend into the last ditch. It is almost useless to try to construct any intelligible policy from the utterances of a Minister who asserts that a perfect national Church ought to have all the people in communion with it, and yet that so very imperfect a national Church as one in which but one-twelfth part of the people is in communion with it ought to be maintained ; who defends such a Church on "the principle of endowments," and then asserts that religious equality is to be effected, and a



great change produced in the status of the unendowed Catholic clergy, but not according to the principle of endowments. You would apparently set up three different Establishments here, and give the heads of these Churches seats in the gilded House of the Lords, while still preserving the endowments of the Protestant Episcopalian Establishment to itself "on the principle of endowments." But, if the principle be good for one of these Churches, it must, according to your argument, be good for the others. Religious equality can scarcely be produced if "the principle of endowments," which is defended as universal in its application, is not to apply to the religion of four millions and a half of the Irish people out of six millions. You know well enough that you are in a false position. You cannot give up the Irish Establishment; and your endeavor to defend it, in language which may not seem utterly contrary to the intelligence of the age, only leads you into a maze of absurdities. Mr. GLADSTONE, is however, determined to lose no time in carrying into effect the pledge he gave on this question last Monday night. He intends, I have learned from good authority, to give notice soon of a Resolution condemnatory of the Irish Establishment. The struggle, therefore, round this doomed Church will be at once begun, and will never cease until the "conscience" of the Nation and not merely your "historical conscience," is relieved by the removal of this monument of ascendancy and injustice. Instead of uniting, it has kept the Irish people divided; and the only hope of union and of religious equality consists in its removal.

I am, dear sir, your voluntary and unpaid political Educator for the time being,

JOHN SCOTT.

## LETTER VIII.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
March 25th, 1868.

The Right Hon. B. DISRAELI, Prime  
Minister of Britain.

DEAR SIR,—At question-time in the House of the Common men on the evening of Thursday, the 19th current, it was, amongst other things, ascertained: that the law-officers of the Crown know nothing of any arrangement in certain parishes by which owners of small tenements collect the rates from their tenants and pay them to the parochial authorities for a consideration; that the further proceeding with the Scotch Reform Bill will be postponed until after the second reading of that for Ireland; and that the Budget will probably be produced on the first Thursday after the Easter recess. Considerable interest was, as usual, exhibited when you were being asked the date at which the said vacation would commence, and there was a simultaneous groan, followed by pathetic cries of "No, no," when you stated that you should have to ask the House to sit in Passion-week. The demonstration was so serious that you were fain to intimate that you would reconsider the matter. On going into Committee of Supply, Mr. WHITE, at great length, and with his special energy, brought forward a motion—to which I will again refer—which would, in effect, bind the House to re-erect the compound householder in his pristine position. The honorable gentleman took Brighton for his principal point of departure, and stated cases there and elsewhere of great



hardship, which would culminate eventually in the disfranchisement of a large number of those to whom the Suffrage was extended last year. He also gave specimens of his research into the principle of the matter, quoting a Prime Minister of the last century and a Chief Justice of the earlier part of this! Experience at Walsall seems to have induced Mr. CHARLES FORSTER to second the motion; which, though not supported by Mr. AYRTON, was discussed by him as involving a case of grievance in many parishes. The case of Birmingham was lengthily and energetically argued by Mr. DIXON; and, as the debate went on, it seemed to be admitted, even by Mr. HENLEY and Mr. GOSCHEN, that the change in the law had put pressure, more or less severe, on persons who have hitherto been compounders. Some members, like Lord HENLEY, were for giving more time for experience of the new law before any change was made in it, while others, of whom Mr. SANDFORD was a type, demanded immediate action, and took the opportunity of giving the Government some of the "other kind of personal rating;" but few or any appeared ready to vote for the motion. The debate was dwindling so decidedly that an appearance on the part of the Government was desirable; so Mr. HARDY pronounced that it would be unsatisfactory to move in the matter while a committee was actually to consider the whole subject of rating; and even, Mr. GLADSTONE, though considering that prompt measures must be taken by Parliament to give the class of voters in question the benefit of the Franchise without existing inconveniences, being of a like opinion, at his request Mr. WHITE withdrew the motion. Everything else was so rapidly cleared away, that soon after ten o'clock there was quite opportunity for Lord MAYO to introduce the Irish Reform Bill. The Franchise part of it was soon disposed of; for the proposal is simply to leave the present £12 rating occupation County Franchise as it is, and to reduce the Borough qualification from £8, at which it now stands, to £4. By this there would be an addition to the existing number of voters of 9,300. The Lodger Franchise would be extended to Ireland. In reference to the redistribution of seats, he argued up to a proposition to give fuller representation in Counties only; and this it was intended to do by asking certain Boroughs to give up some of their more or less superfluous members. Strict political justice would be done in the scheme of disfranchisement. It was also stated that there was to be a Boundary Commission for Ireland. There was a little hubbub after the close of Lord MAYO's speech, but not exactly any excitement. To be sure, some Irish members, Dr. BRADY to wit, complained that, even in a Reform Bill, regulation for Ireland differed from that for England; and he, in an indefinite way, signified that he "wanted more." Naturally, Mr. O'BEIRNE, as one of the members sought to be suppressed, had something to say, but personally he was magnanimous, being only grieved that there was no development of those principles in the Bill which were held so fast in the case of the English Reform Act. He threatened to move the omission of all the disfranchising provisions of the Bill. So far as he could be understood, Mr. Rearden wanted, first, the Repeal of the Union, and, afterwards, that forty more members should be added to the present House. Without objecting to the Bill, Mr. GLADSTONE hinted that its defect was the very limited addition which it made to the constituency, which might be enlarged by the adoption of an £8 County Franchise.

The discussion in the House of the Common men, on the evening



of the 19th current, showed how erroneous was the supposition that the compound householder was dead. The compound householder is alive and kicking. Before Lord MAYO introduced the Irish Reform Bill, Mr. WHITE explained how seriously Brighton had been injured by the new plan for collecting rates; and in a formal resolution he moved, that as much of the Reform Act as made occupiers liable for poor rates, instead of owners, should be repealed; that the name of every occupier should be put on the rate-book; that the payment of rates by the owner, under the compounding system, should be deemed payment by the occupier, and should entitle him to the Franchise. Whether or not the motion is sound, it is undeniable that the abolition of the old system has subjected the poor to great hardship, and the municipal authorities to great inconvenience. From the poorer parts of London has come one chorus of complaint. Mr. SANDFORD states that the Borough of Maldon cannot get the rates collected, that the local expenses are mounting up with the usual speed, and that for want of the usual funds they cannot be defrayed. Many other Boroughs could tell a similar tale. But, probably, the most striking case is presented by Birmingham. As Mr. DIXON informed the House, the Reform Act would treble the size of his constituency, and more than 30,000 of the new class of voters have been compound householders. Many, however, cannot or will not qualify themselves. About 4,000 expect to be exempted on the ground that they are unable to pay any rates, and a large number who are quite able are unwilling. Those malcontents must be summoned to pay, and in order that the summonses may be served the authorities must appoint half-a-dozen extra overseers. But the Act forbids the appointment of more than two. The ugly question arises, therefore, whether, if more than the legal number be appointed, a court of law can enforce the summonses which the extra officials may issue. On this point the opinion of counsel is divided, and meanwhile Birmingham hardly knows what to do. Nor is that the worst effect of the Act. In some towns, such as Birmingham, it virtually imposes a heavy tax on the new voters. Under the compounding system those householders paid the reduced rate; now they pay the full rate; and Mr. DIXON calculates that, in the case of his own constituents, the difference between the two is about 15s. a-head. Thus every Birmingham man to whom the Household Suffrage Act has given a vote, knows that he is fined that amount for the privilege. Nor is it voters alone who must pay the new impost. In every Borough there are many Civil Servants of the humbler class, such as letter-carriers, whose position debars them from voting. Under the old system, most of those people paid the compounding rate, and now, though they are still kept as far away from the hustings as ever, they must, on an average, pay 15s. additional. And still more hard is the case of female occupiers. They have no votes; on them the Reform Act conferred no direct benefit; they can ill afford to pay one additional shilling; and yet they, too, must bear the novel burden. Nor does the evil end here. So large will be the number of defaulters, that a given rate will not yield the same amount as it would under the system of compounding. According to Mr. DIXON, Birmingham has sustained during the present year a loss of £8,000. To make up the required amount, therefore, the authorities must impose heavier rates; and, since a mass of people must be excused from paying anything, an additional burden must fall upon the actual ratepayers. Thus the Act makes many pay for what



they do not get, others for what they do not want, and others for the deficit caused by the poverty or the parsimony of their neighbors. But it is easier to point out the evil than to devise the remedy. Even if Mr. WHITE's motion were faultless, we should act rashly in accepting it; since a committee has been appointed for the express purpose of considering the whole matter. The Government might, as Mr. GLADSTONE suggested, devise some temporary means of relief; but, before legislating on the entire subject, the House must hear what is said by the committee. So complicated is the question, that to make such sweeping changes as that proposed by Mr. WHITE, would, in all probability, do more harm than good. In itself, indeed, the resolution of the honorable gentleman is open to grave objection, and in withdrawing it, Mr. WHITE acted wisely. With his usual acuteness, Mr. HENLEY pointed out one serious blot. If, as the member for Brighton suggests, owners were made liable for the rate instead of occupiers, vast political power would be placed in the owners' hands. The proprietor of fifty or a hundred small houses might forget or omit to pay the rates at the proper time; if, as might often happen, he had a political end to serve, he would be only too glad to let the appointed day pass; and, whether he should do so by oversight or by design, his tenants would have no votes for that year. They might wish to vote for Mr. BRIGHT, Mr. MILL, or Mr. FORSTER. They might be anxious to keep out some candidate of strongly-pronounced Tory views. And only when it was too late would they learn, that, since the landlord had not paid the rates, they were for a twelvemonth practically disfranchised. Mr. GOSCHEN, it is true, thinks that the danger might be averted by a simple device. On a day fixed beforehand, let the overseers call upon the landlord for the full amount. If he fail to pay, let the fact be made known to the tenants, and let them be told that, unless they themselves discharge the rate, they will have no votes. This course could be adopted, but it would expose the occupier to enormous inconvenience. Since he has paid the rate in his weekly rent, he makes no provision for a second payment; and when the overseer demands 20s. or 30s., the poor tenant cannot produce the amount. A better plan would be to impose a heavy penalty on every landlord who should so far betray his trust as not to discharge within the stipulated time the rates which he had undertaken to pay. Mr. SANDFORD suggested a different course. He would draw a hard line, say £4, below which no rate would be levied and no Franchise could be claimed. But that would practically be a surrender of Household Suffrage, and the House of the Common men will make no such retrograde step. Mr. SANDFORD proposed another plan, which Mr. AYRTON brought forward last year, and which would enable the class of compounding householders to pay the old reduced rates. But that plan is also beset with difficulty; for it would entail a loss on every Borough, which must be made up by the levying of heavier imposts on some class of ratepayers. The whole subject, indeed, is so obscure that the House stands in absolute need of the guidance which it will receive from the report of the select committee.

The Earl of MAYO said, in rising to move for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the representation of the people in Ireland, he would endeavor to explain as briefly as possible the provisions of the Bill. In 1850, an Act was passed which very materially affected the representation of the Irish people. The effect of that Act was to add to all former Franchises which existed in Counties, an occupation Franchise



based upon a rating of £12. In addition, also, to the Franchise existing in towns, an £8 occupation Franchise was introduced. Before that Act the entire number of electors in Ireland was about 71,000—namely, 31,000 in Counties and 40,000 in Boroughs. In 1866, the last year for which there was a return, the total number of electors was 200,700—namely, 170,000 in Counties and 30,700 in Boroughs. He proposed to dismiss at once the consideration of the County Franchise in Ireland, by announcing it was not the intention of the Government to make any alteration in that respect, as the Franchise was precisely the same as that of the Act of last year for English Counties. With respect to the Borough Franchise, it was proposed to make considerable alteration. In Ireland, the occupier in the first instance paid the whole of the poor-rate; but as a rule he was allowed to deduct from his rent half of the rate; and, therefore, the poor-rate was substantially divided between landlord and tenant, with this exception, that in all hereditaments valued below £4 the immediate lessor was liable for the whole rate. This law existed generally over the whole country, with the exception of five towns,—Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick, and Belfast,—where the immediate lessor was liable for the payment of all rates at and below a rental of £8. It was proposed to assimilate the law in that respect, and place these five towns upon the same footing as the rest of the country—that was to say, that the poor-rate of every house above £4 should be paid by the landlord and tenant, and at and below £4 the immediate lessor should be liable for the entire amount. Keeping in view the payment of rates as the basis of the Franchise, it was proposed to fix the Borough Franchise at £4. The effect would be that every man in Ireland who was liable to pay any portion of the poor-rates would have a vote for the Borough in which he resided. The same conditions with regard to residence and registration as those of the Act of last year would be attached to the Franchise. The effect of the proposed addition to the Franchise would be to add 9,300 to the present number. It was also proposed to extend the Lodger Franchise to Ireland, and as soon as possible to issue a Boundary Commission. He now came to the more interesting part of the Bill, relating to the redistribution of seats. At present there are 33 Boroughs in Ireland returning 39 members. The population of those Boroughs was 790,000, their valuation £1,500,000, and the number of electors 30,700. It was very remarkable that the three cities Dublin, Cork, and Belfast absorbed more than half the population of the whole of the Boroughs, and two-thirds of the valuation. Taking out those three cities, the remainder of the Boroughs contained only 350,000 inhabitants, £480,000 valuation, and only 13,000 electors. The population of Ireland was about five millions and a half, and the valuation £13,000,000, showing how small a portion of the wealth and population of the country was absorbed in those 33 Boroughs. There were 32 Counties in Ireland, which returned 64 members to Parliament, and, taking population and wealth into account, there was an enormous discrepancy in the representation as between Counties and Boroughs. With the exception of Antrim, the four largest Counties were Cork, Tyrone, Down, and Tipperary, which returned one member for every 5,625 electors, while the other 28 counties returned one member for every 2,300 electors. Those four largest Counties had therefore a very strong claim for additional representation. The question was how additional representation was to be



obtained. It would be unjust to withdraw any members from any of the towns returning two members. The principle of grouping could not be adapted to Ireland, and, consequently, the only mode of obtaining the additional representation for the four Counties was by requesting some of the smaller Boroughs to make a sacrifice. These were your Ministerial proposals. You had endeavored to devise a plan by which great improvement would be made without effecting any violent change. No man could say you had acted from a party point of view, because of the six Boroughs taken three sat on one side of the House and three on the other. Your Irish Secretary confidently submitted the scheme to the attention of the House. The Speaker then put the question that leave be given to bring in the Bill, and declared that the ayes had it. Mr. REARDEN, who, with Colonel FRENCH and Dr. BRADY, had risen to speak on the question, complained that he had not been heard, and moved the adjournment of the House. Colonel FRENCH objected to the Bill, stating that the entire addition to the Borough constituencies in Ireland would not be more than 9,000. Mr. C. FORTESCUE asked when the Boundary Commission will be appointed for Ireland, and in what manner the third member would be given to Dublin? Earl MAYO said the third member would represent the minority. The Boundary Commission could not be appointed until after the second reading of the Bill. Dr. BRADY objected to the Bill on the ground that Ireland was treated different from England and Scotland. Mr. REARDEN would state his grounds for moving amendments to the Bill. The people of Ireland are entitled to a proportionately equal number of members with the people of Great Britain. The right hon. gentleman wishes to be liberal, but the 54 Irish members who represent 8,000 Protestants, and sit behind him, will prevent that as far as possible. There are 51 Irish members on the Liberal side of the House, representing 5,000,000 of Roman Catholics; while the 20,000,000 of people in England have 500 representatives. In "another place" the members are, almost without exception, anti-Roman. If the people of Ireland do not insist on something equal to the Ballot or the manhood Suffrage of Australia, they will deserve all the miseries they suffer from the Act of Union. Mr. GLADSTONE said, "I shall be glad to know whether the noble lord will lay on the table any statement explanatory of the speech he has made, and the principles which have guided the measures of the Government? There are two principles in the Bill which are most marked. The first is the addition of members to the County representation in Ireland, and the second the disfranchisement or merging of the Franchises of certain small Boroughs. I am not prepared to object to either of those principles *in limine*. At the same time, if the representation is to be taken from the Boroughs and given to the Counties, I think it is impossible not to take into view the state of the Franchise in the Boroughs and Counties respectively. And I learn with great disappointment that the Government have not discovered the means of making an addition on this great and important occasion to the Irish constituency going beyond the very modest figure of 9,000. There is, however, the question of the County Franchise, and though I do not give any opinion upon the subject at present, I wish to reserve perfect freedom to consider it; because, although undoubtedly there are some good principles in the Bill, I think, when we look at the general idea which runs through all Reform Bills, which is that of widening the basis of our institutions with the view of strengthening them, we must



confess that such an addition to the constituency as is proposed, is a very limited addition. And the more especially when we remember that it was proposed by the Government of Lord Russell to reduce the County Franchise to an £8 rental Franchise. All I am anxious to do is to leave matters open, and I sincerely entertain a hope that when we come to discuss them in detail, and see the plan of the noble lord in print, together with the statements he promises, we shall be able to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion upon them." If any of his old Irish Tory friends should attack Lord Mayo for having brought in an Irish Reform Bill, he may honestly use the plea of the frail damsel in the old story,—“It is a very little one.” It is a kind of dwarf bill, and, indeed, might be exhibited with great success as a strange freak of Nature, perfect in all its parts, even with its little Boundary Commission, but of most diminutive stature. For instance, it adds 9,300 to the Borough electors of the whole kingdom. What a magnificent donation! Then we have two trifling inconsistencies. In Ireland we are to have that “hard and fast line” so much denounced last year, and we are to retain the compound householder so summarily dismissed from our English towns. The Franchise is to be fixed at £4 rating—equivalent in Ireland to a £7 rental; and since in the cases of houses rated below £4 the landlord pays rates, at that point Lord Mayo draws the line. As to the County Franchise, there is to be no alteration, because it is at present fixed at £12. This is the most indefensible part of the Bill. If in 1850 Lord Russell found it needful to reduce the County Franchise to £12, in order to bring it to the level in some degree of what was then the English County Franchise, there ought to be a further reduction now, in order that Ireland may keep step with the extension of the English County Franchise carried last year. Dr. BRADY properly pointed out that £12 a year in Ireland is equivalent to £18 a year in England, and I hope that this question of the County vote will be raised by a decisive resolution from the Liberal side of the House. When the question of disfranchisement is considered, the measure is so small that a political microscope of considerable power is required to discover it. Your idea of disfranchisement is absurd. Lord Mayo does not kill off the smallest Boroughs, but if he finds a Borough situate in the center of a populous County, he sacrifices it to please its neighbors,—while smaller Boroughs in other localities will still return members. Liberal members must take this little Bill, and act towards it as they did towards its big English brother,—they must so change the measure that nobody will know it to be the same. Its authors seem to have asked each other a question similar in spirit to that addressed to an expectant waiter by a gentleman immortalized in *Punch*: “What is the very smallest measure we can give Ireland without being considered mean?” The Ministry have hit upon the most infinitesimal pill they could make up against the Irish earthquake, but I am not sure that they have secured the other desideratum.—the “not being considered mean.”

The leader of the Liberal party has kept his word to Ireland and to public opinion, and he is now prepared to follow up his memorable speech with action. Last Monday, Mr. GLADSTONE laid on the table of the House of the Common men a Resolution on the subject of the Irish Church Establishment. The declarations already made by Mr. GLADSTONE in the name of the Liberal party have, it is well-known, closed the mouths of insincere critics like Mr. BOUYERIE, and left no rag of



excuse to "followers who won't follow." Liberal opinion is vitalized again; the party take close and stern fighting order; and Ireland is made quieter and happier with the light of new hopes. It would have been serious, indeed, if some clear and practical action had not followed the straightforward words employed on the evening of Monday, the 16th current; but in this respect it was enough that Mr. GLADSTONE was the speaker; and I think the country and Parliament will not find the Resolution in any degree inadequate to the manifesto. "The Irish Establishment as a State Church must cease to exist"—these are the words which will be made good by all and every means that the Liberal party can constitutionally employ. But should the Resolution be carried, it must obviously have an important practical effect at once. The bond which links the Church with the Executive and Legislative powers of the realm would be cut; and though the results would be gently displayed, they would from the very first annul and abolish the established character. Disendowment would thus be gradually carried out, as bishop after bishop, dignitary after dignitary, and incumbent after incumbent departed to a better world, and left their troublesome possessions here to the "moth and rust," or, probably rather, to a Church Property Commission. "Disestablishment" would really begin from the very inception of such a process as I foreshadow, because, instead of being the antecessor of a line of State priests, each tenant of a preferment would behold in himself the last that should be appointed to his particular charge. It is clear that, while the Resolution might forbid any further extension of vested interests, it might respect those which already exist; and, at the same time, it might tend to terminate, by solemnly registered Parliamentary opinion, the existence of the Establishment in Ireland as a State Church. Nor would there be in such a Resolution anything which should cause dismay to a just and sensible Irish Protestant, still less to an English Churchman. If the advocates of the Establishment urge that nothing can replace for them the dignity and lustre of connexion with the State, there is but one reply. That dignity and that lustre they must relinquish, whatever be their value; for the opinion of the day is inexorably made up, and the peace and credit of the Empire absolutely depend upon the surrender or the withdrawal of these so-called advantages. For all spiritual purposes, the loss will be more than made up by the ardor of voluntary effort; and that is the only consideration which ought to weigh with serious minds like yours and your allies. However this may prove, it will be grossly unjust to pretend that the endowments in England would be menaced by the surcease of those in Ireland. There is no sort of parallel, as Mr. GLADSTONE pointed out, between the two Churches; and although you, in your passionate devotion to Protestantism in both countries, may press this argument, it will be perfectly easy to assuage your apprehensions, and to show that Churches exist now-a-days, not by the mere incident of State recognition, but by the work they do and the place they hold in the community. If the Resolution should wear the character which the public expect, it will leave no just ground for the sinister cry of "No Popery!" nor for the watchword "To defend the outworks of the Church;" but rather it will unite, with singular felicity, a respect for existing claims with the paramount necessity for doing quickly that which must be done. The principle of the surcease of State appointments to religious functions once proclaimed, the rest would be matter of detail, and of detail



already well outlined for a Bill. As livings and emoluments dropped in by resignation or demise, the capital fund of the Establishment would bit by bit fall into the hands of a Church Property Commission. Mr. BRIGHT has calculated the whole capital fund at the value of £10,000,000. Be it more or less, it would thus gradually accrue to the Commissioners, and nothing could be more simple than that they should sell the tithes, &c., to the landed proprietors, and with the proceeds furnish a free grant, for ever dissociated from the Government, say £1,000,000 sterling or more, to the Catholic communities, and lesser gifts to the Episcopalian or the Presbyterian communions respectively. These creeds would then be left to their own anchors and cables, and Ireland would have some seven millions sterling in hand for educational and moral development ; for, beyond doubt, the surplus should be expended in and for Ireland. The fund would begin to arise as the appointments to Church offices ceased ; and it would be easy to make all the arrangements if such a plan proceeded with equal steps from the beginning to the happy end. At present, of course, it is not needful to go into further details. As I have said, they are not “in the air ;” but I should not be surprised if the vigorous action which is now commencing followed in future the direction of the programme thus already suggested. For the moment, however, our interest must be fixed on the forthcoming Resolution, which is to register the solemn intentions of the Legislature, and to assure Ireland that she shall have Justice, and not merely promises. Of Justice, so far as Mr. GLADSTONE can effect it, she will be instantly assured ; and if paltry personal ends, or hollow demands for “time,” or cunning threats of dissolution cross the path of honor and equity, *securus judicat populus*—“the Nation is the judge of its representatives.”

Three years ago Mr. GLADSTONE declared, in his place in Parliament, that the abolition of the State Church in Ireland was a question of the future ; and has now proclaimed to the Empire, in words which will become historical, that the time for a momentous change in the ecclesiastical polity of Ireland has arrived. “The Irish Church, I am convinced, is an institution,—and it is so by the law of its existence,—which must be representative of the spirit of ascendancy. What we want is, the expulsion of the spirit of ascendancy from Ireland ; and, in order to do so, we must deal decisively with the question of the Irish Church.” To appreciate the full meaning and import of this weighty declaration, we must accurately understand the political privileges which the Protestant Establishment at present enjoys, and the mode in which they were acquired. Is the Leader of the Opposition, in his bold announcement, preaching a policy of confiscation ? Is he about to enter a crusade against ancient vested rights ? Does he propose to lay sacrilegious hands upon property long ago consecrated to pious uses ? Unhappily, ninety-nine out of a hundred educated Englishmen and Scotchmen are unable to answer these questions correctly. Few people know how the Establishment became possessed of its revenues in Ireland, or by what tenure it holds them. Many religious people believe that to secularize Church property, or to appropriate it for new purposes, is an act of impiety ; but, before we condemn the disendowment of the Irish Church on that score, we clearly ought to know the history of her possessions. It may be that her own title is frail, or even absolutely invalid. Roman Catholics look upon the Protestants as usurpers, who hold tithes and glebes by



the right of the superior force. Which is the correct view? If the existing Establishment is a mere intruder into domains not anciently her own, it is very obvious that her claim to State privileges is much weakened. Is it not remarkable that so few people take the trouble to investigate for themselves those antecedent questions which are found lying at the very root of the controversy? If we would argue logically and safely, we ought to clearly know how the Protestant body acceded to its fine estates in Ireland. For seven centuries a Church has been maintained in Ireland by the civil authority. The Council of Cashel 1172 established certain decrees which were in the nature of articles of union between the Anglo-Irish Church and State; and the connection was maintained until the Reformation, in the reign of HENRY VIII. It is a remarkable fact that, for a considerable time after the severance of England from the Roman communion, Catholics in Ireland generally acquiesced in the change. The bishops complied with the ecclesiastical decree, and the native people generally resorted to the parish churches, and submitted to the Act of Uniformity, until the end of the reign of ELIZABETH. This statement does not rest on the authority of Protestant historians alone. Some of the most eminent Romanist writers have avowed that for a considerable period the mass of the Irish people conformed outwardly, at least, to Protestantism; and there seems strong ground to believe, that if the country had been governed with humanity and justice, the majority of the population would have ultimately accepted the Reformation. The Irish were made dissenters from the Established Church by the same policy which has been the principal cause of dissent in England,—intolerance and persecution. From the time of ELIZABETH they were subjected to systematic oppression, and they learned to hate their oppressors, their laws, and their religion. The desolating wars of her reign, the harsh policy of her successors, the confiscations and proscriptions which to this day render the name of WILLIAM III especially detestable to the Celtic population, the pile of disabling statutes which the Parliaments of the four GEORGES directed against Papists,—all these causes have powerfully contributed to confirm and intensify a national hatred of Protestantism. If England had really wanted to force Ireland into communion with Rome, she could not have taken more effectual steps than she did. The oppressed, down-trodden race were taught,—pains were taken to teach them,—to execrate the Saxon oppressor and to loathe everything connected with him. Can we wonder that under such a regime the religion of the English became odious? Mr. GLADSTONE gave utterance to a historical truth when he declared the other night that the Protestant Establishment represented the spirit of ascendancy. It was and it is essentially a Parliamentary Church,—a statutory institution,—a public department, existing by no higher authority than that which founded the Board of Trade or the Post Office. It never has been a National Church in the proper sense of that expression. In diminishing the endowments of the existing Establishment, and in apportioning them to the actual needs of the people, is it true that we destroy ancient vested rights? A great part of the property originally dedicated to ecclesiastical purposes, including a large share of the tithes, has been secularized since the reign of HENRY VIII, and has got into the hands of various lay impropiators. Again, if we consider the origin of those revenues which the Irish State Church still retains, we must remember that



they were originally given by pious donors,—we will not say to the Romanists, because that is begging the question,—but, at all events, to a clergy which held communion with Rome. When the great separation from the Papal See occurred in England, the immense majority of the people acquiesced. In England the people did not establish a new Church; the English merely reformed and purified the old one. But on this side of the St. George's Channel the case was altogether different. It is true that for some years the people, or a considerable portion of them, wavered in their allegiance to Rome, but finally they affirmed, and rejected the Anglican communion. Protestantism never became a general national faith among them, and the Protestant clergy never had any better title than Acts of the British Legislature. The Romanist, therefore, has at least some show of justice in his favor when he calls the transfer of ecclesiastical revenues to the Protestants an act of spoliation. At all events, the State Church has not nearly so strong a title to her revenues in Ireland as she has in England. Those who argue for the inalienability of property which has once been dedicated to ecclesiastical uses are apt to forget how much of that property is secularized already. A very large proportion of the great tithes and other revenues has, by various changes, come into the hands of laymen. It is not establishing any new principle to determine that part of the ecclesiastical revenues shall be devoted to secular objects. Tithes originally were not given for the exclusive use of priests; from the very earliest times a portion of them was devoted to the relief of the poor, and to other purposes not strictly connected with religion. BLACKSTONE says—"At the first establishment of parochial clergy, the tithes were distributed in a fourfold division; one for the use of the bishop, another for maintaining the fabric of the Church, a third for the poor, and the fourth to provide for the incumbent." This quadripartite division was a general law of Christendom, and, therefore, the ancient endowments must have been made upon the understanding that part of them should be devoted to eleemosynary purposes. So far from violating the intentions of the original benefactors, we should be promoting one of their chief objects were we to apply part of their bounty to the maintenance and the education of the poor. In defence of a scheme for transferring some of the superfluous wealth belonging to the Irish Church, the most ancient prescriptive authority may be cited. But are we absolutely bound by the fetters of tradition? Are the people made for the laws, or the laws for the people? Doubtless it is easy to refer to solemn usages and regulations of Government which promise perpetuity to the Irish Protestant Establishment. It was made an integral part of the compact recorded in the Act of Union in 1800, and in the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829. But are we never to be free from old bargains? Surely they may be dissolved by the same power which made them,—the will of the parties affected. Surely our right of self-government is as strong as that of our forefathers. If men point to the old laws which guarantee Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, I answer that the experiment has been tried, and has utterly failed. The State Church does not do the work it was set to do. It does not evangelize the people. It is not, it does not profess to be, a missionary body. So far as a large part of Ireland is concerned, it is the mere dead image and simulacrum of a Church, a legal fiction, which Acts of Parliament and ancient title-deeds cannot convert into a living reality.



The House of the Common men presented "a scene" on last Monday evening which does not often occur. Members hurried into the House as soon as ever the Speaker had done prayers,—How is it that members are not present at prayers?—and it was obvious that it was not to present petitions or to give notices that they were so early in attendance. Mr. GLADSTONE read the terms of his motion, and was very much cheered by the gentlemen below the gangway on the Liberal side, whilst the pure Whigs behind him preserved a silence that was ominous to success in the lobby. The terms of the motion require a word of explanation as to form. It is a somewhat roundabout way apparently for the House to address the Throne, but it is necessary to do so in order to comply with the Constitutional rule of Queen, Lords, and Commons. The property of the Church is vested in the Queen as the Sovereign trustee of the Nation, and an Estate of the Realm cannot order any alteration in its disposition except with the consent of the Crown. You acted with great spirit and great courtesy on the occasion, for when your great antagonist and rival threw down the glove you at once took it up in the spirit of a chivalrous knight, and offered a ring for the tournament for Monday next. It was pleasant to hear how cleverly you proposed to arrange business in order that the Opposition might not be disappointed in the fray commencing, and Mr. GLADSTONE, not to be outdone in courtesy, expressed his thanks to you in a manner becoming the occasion, and the head of the Opposition. In consenting to an early day for the Irish Church Resolutions, you did not, however, forget to make an easy passage certain for Sir JOHN PAKINGTON's Army Estimates, and a more adroit stroke was, probably, never accomplished, for it has not occurred that for many years we have had Estimates so capable of challenging criticism as the Estimates for 1868. The grand point, however, is, that the Irish Church Establishment is doomed. Mr. GLADSTONE has given notice of a motion which destines it to destruction. The House of the Common men cannot refuse to treat his proposition with the consideration which its importance deserves; and British statesmen cannot refrain from going further, and condemning and removing the greatest scandal of the age. One simply wonders how so great a Reform has been so long delayed, and how it is that a grievance denounced years ago has been tolerated to a period which ought to have been the witness of its extirpation. In no spirit of faction do I hail the triumph that is inevitable. Few know, and few care to know, the evil interests that are bound up with the institution whose existence is now a matter of a few months. Were it merely an agency of religious teaching, propagating a creed which, although hostile to the sentiments of the people, had yet something to recommend it to their intelligence, it might be borne with as one of those social afflictions from which there is no escape. It is, however, devoid of a single redeeming feature, and charity itself cannot offer it the shadow of protection. It is, happily, doomed, and blessings innumerable will flow from its destruction. With the Irish Church Establishment will go down the greatest evils that ever afflicted this country. Ascendancy, intolerance, the spirit of bigotry, which is the spirit of persecution, will disappear, and in its stead there will shine forth in all its purity and brightness, the spirit of that pure and holy faith which means peace to all mankind. With the Established Church in this country have been bound up the greatest scandal and the greatest grievance of misgovernment. It has been the



fruitful mother of intolerance,—the rich source of difference and dispute. The symbol of conquest it became the badge of degradation, and to the last it has continued to be the exponent of a policy which was as ruthless in its tendency as it was unjustifiable in its principle. It is impossible that there could be peace in Ireland so long as the Church Establishment continues. Pride and arrogance and bigotry are the products of its existence. It has no hold upon the affections and sympathies of the people. It was imposed upon them against their will; it has been their great persecutor in darker days; it is still their great oppressor, and it must be got rid of, no matter what may be the cost or sacrifice. When it has disappeared the only wonder will be how well it can be dispensed with. For over its ruins will spring into life the blessed seeds of harmony and peace. In Ireland, then, there will be no vain pretensions to superiority,—no offensive assumptions of exclusive privileges based upon State orthodoxy. Each sect and party will stand on its own merits, and on the disappearance of a false and unjust precedence there will come a righteous and satisfactory equality, which will prove a blessing to the land, distracted by many troubles, the greatest of which are and have been the religious bickerings for which the State Church is solely responsible. I earnestly hope the existence of that Church has drawn to a close, and I cannot exaggerate the satisfaction with which I view the manly step that Mr. GLADSTONE has taken for its final extinction.

Public opinion will echo the “loud cheers” that greeted the first of the three Resolutions which Mr. GLADSTONE offered last Monday night with respect to the Irish Church, and Tory speakers and organs can no longer complain that the policy of the Opposition is uncertain or hesitating. Nothing could well be plainer than the language of the substantive proposition with which the Leader of the Liberal party has met the negative declarations of your Government. The same decisive words are to be found in the Resolution which in Mr. GLADSTONE’S speech drew from his entire party the first united and enthusiastic shout of adhesion which had been heard in its ranks for many a day. “It is necessary that the Established Church should cease to exist as an Establishment,”—this is the Resolution which Mr. GLADSTONE calls upon the House of the Common men to register, and all that follows is either of the nature of the necessary reservations, or of details to effect the one and paramount end. A weaker declaration would be of no use. The time has utterly gone by for paltering with Ireland. She waits in patience now, because she really believes that statesmen are in earnest; and they are not in earnest, if the House of the Common men of Britain will not affirm the necessity for abolishing the connexion of the alien Church with the State. Only such an affirmation and a just Land Tenure Act are needed to turn Ireland from a national trouble into a main element of strength and glory to the realm. In the first sentence, therefore, of the three Resolutions resides the pith of them all, and if the House of the Common men adopts,—as it must, sooner or later,—the principle expressed, the rest is matter of detail rather than of principle. It was, of course, needful to add to the proposition of disestablishment the clause guarding personal and existing rights; and these naturally suggest the second Resolution. Let us originate no more of the “vested interests,” which bristle in this path as in that of all reform or political justice. Let the present House of the Common men show that it is sincere by resolving that



the public patronage shall no longer be exercised to fill up vacancies in the Irish Church Establishment. Thus the axe is at once laid to the root of the monstrous upas-tree. The acceptance of the Resolution would warn the cadets of the Establishment to push their fortunes elsewhere, and would make nominees and patrons aware that the beginning of the end had come. A cautionary half-sentence guards this proposal against inconveniences and infractions of undoubted rights. The third Resolution proposes an Address to her Majesty, praying that the Sovereign will transfer to Parliament her interest in the temporalities of the Irish archbishops, bishops, dignitaries, and benefices. Thus, of course, a large portion of the funds in question would come into the public hands, and, with the consent of Parliament, would be as completely at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being, as the Excise duties. No alarmed Orangeman or dismayed Tory must pretend that the question of secularizing the temporalities is too new to be discussed. On Monday next thirty-three years to a day will have elapsed since a serious attempt was made to reduce the Irish Establishment. On the 30th of March, 1835, Lord JOHN RUSSELL, then leader of the Opposition, moved that the House should resolve itself into committee "to consider the temporalities of the Church of Ireland." In committee, he proposed to move a Resolution recommending the application of the surplus Church revenue to purposes of general education. At the same time he announced that, if the Resolution were adopted, he should move that it be presented to the Crown in an address, with an humble entreaty "that his Majesty would be most graciously pleased to enable the House to carry it into effect." To persons not familiar with the strict rules which for centuries have governed the relations between the Sovereign and the Legislature, this method of addressing the Crown,—the same now employed in the third Resolution,—may seem unnecessarily circuitous. The explanation, however, is simple. Where the patronage or proprietary rights of the Sovereign are affected by any proposed Parliamentary measure, it is necessary to obtain the Royal sanction before proceeding with the Bill. It had been decided, in a precisely similar case, that the House of the Common men could not constitutionally dispose of the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown without the King's special consent, expressed by a message, either upon the advice of the Ministers, or in answer to an address. The motion for going into committee on the question of the temporalities was resisted by Sir ROBERT PEEL, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, but was after a four days' debate, carried on the 2nd of April by a majority of 33. The main issue was, whether there should be an "appropriation" of surplus revenue. The Tory party were willing that the emoluments of the Church should be subject to redistribution and re-arrangement, but were not willing that any portion should be applied to secular purposes. A Resolution was ultimately adopted: "That any surplus revenue of the present Church Establishment in Ireland not required for the spiritual care of its members be applied to the moral and religious education of all classes of the people, without distinction of religious persuasion, providing for the resumption of such surplus or of any such part of it as may be required by an increase in the number of the members of the Established Church." Lord DERBY, then Lord STANLEY, spoke and voted with the Government. He contended that the "appropriation" would not pacify Ireland, and protested against



what he described as a proscription of the Established Church in particular districts because only a few persons were attached to it. After the Resolution of the committee had been reported to the House, another critical division took place on the 7th of April, 1835, the majority being 27 against the Government. On the following day the Duke of WELLINGTON in the House of the Lords, and Sir ROBERT PEEL in the House of the Common men, announced the dissolution of the Ministry; and on the 18th of April Lord MELBOURNE notified the formation of a new Cabinet, in which he occupied the place of First Lord of the Treasury. You may choose, therefore, what fighting ground you will on Monday next, but you cannot claim that of "unheard of novelty" or "violent innovation." Not only has the subject come before Parliament, but public opinion has not been silent in the interval. On the contrary, such changes as have taken place point the moral of the present juncture with a commentary full of instruction. It is true that the leading men of both parties have done little to prepare for action, but the work has been accomplished for them by events, and even the commotion in America has had its reflex influence in Ireland. If you compare the state of feeling in 1835 and in 1868,—the spread of disaffection in Ireland, the reprobation of the alien Church among all parties in England and Scotland, and the confessions of the Tories themselves,—you must see at once that the time for action has arrived. If you had recognized that necessity, you might have kept your lead on this question as well as in the Reform legislation; but your deliberate resolve to adopt, for the moment, a policy of inaction and of reticence has forced the opposite policy on the Liberals. From the moment when, anticipating the report of your own Commission, you declared the other night for endowment always and everywhere, you positively went behind the rear of your own party, and forgot the first rudiments of the "education" you have been so long imparting. Will you meet these necessary propositions with a reiteration of the theory that the existing House is not "morally competent" to pronounce upon such a question as the Irish Church? Or will you pretend that the fate of the English Establishment is bound up with the destiny of the alien and hated incubus in Ireland, and that "endowment" is a sacred principle which cannot be touched without imperiling the palladium of religion? Neither assertion can be entertained. The odium incurred by the spurious and hostile Establishment on this side of the Channel does but cast discredit and injury on the genuine Church of England: it is not an outpost, but a provocative of attack, a source of weakness. And although the expiring Parliament may not be the best suited to the task of accomplishing so fundamental a change, those who object on that score forget that it is for statesmen to take the initiative in propounding great measures which public opinion may fairly demand a few months to study. In Mr. GLADSTONE's declaration, then, Reformers have the policy of Liberals as regards the Irish Church. There stands the programme of their intentions, and, following his Leader, every real Liberal member must insist upon the acceptance or the triumph of the Resolutions. The satisfaction of Ireland, not the expulsion of your Ministry, is the object to be achieved, and it is immaterial whether the end be attained by your submission or by your defeat.

Mr. GLADSTONE has fully redeemed the pledge he gave on the last night of the Irish debate. He does not merely lay down an abstract



principle. He indicates a policy, and shows how it can be carried into effect. The first Resolution is, that, while paying all due regard to personal interests and individual rights of property, the Irish Church shall cease to exist as an Establishment. This Resolution really disposes of your "principle of endowments." It condemns, by implication, any attempt to put the other Irish Churches on the same level as the State Church according to the plan of leveling up, and only proposes to produce religious equality by taking away the exceptional privileges of the Establishment. It leaves the property of the Church to be dealt with as Parliament may afterwards decide. This is in fact a merely secondary consideration, and ought not at the present time to complicate the main issue, how religious equality is to be produced. Reformers are not, however, permitted to remain in doubt as to the manner in which this Resolution is to be met. You said, in replying to Mr. GLADSTONE the last night of the Irish debate; that this is a moribund Parliament, and therefore incompetent to deal with so weighty a question. It is not a little curious thus to see the same politician who last Session pretended to surrender his Ministerial functions to the "House," who accepted a Reform Bill from the "House," and who showed so much deference to the "House" that he requested it to give him a policy, now turning round and questioning the moral competence of this same "House" to express a definite opinion on the question of the Irish Church. A Parliament which has the moral competence to continue the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act is surely competent to consider any measure for the redress of Irish grievances. Were the constituents ever consulted about the establishment of Household Suffrage? You said that in Lord Palmerston's last speech to his constituents there was not one word about the Irish Church; and that the question of its maintenance had never been placed before the electors who returned the present House of the Common men. But there was as little about Reform as about the Irish Church in the programme which Lord Palmerston submitted to the electors in the Summer of 1865. The political issue was really narrowed to a question of personal confidence in the octogenarian statesman. Household Suffrage, which Parliament has accepted, would have been much more a surprise to Lord Palmerston than a Resolution of the House of the Common men to disestablish the Irish Church. He had been a Member of a Government that in 1834 made no secret of its desire to remove the plague-spot of the Establishment; but he had never been the Member of a Government that had been in favor of Household Suffrage. This great reduction of the Franchise was much less expected at the commencement of last Session than a question this Session affecting the existence of the Irish Establishment. Some such Resolution as the first of those laid before the House of the Common men last Monday night has been for months "looming in the distance." The Irish Tories, at least, cannot complain that they have been taken by surprise. What was the meaning of the Hillsborough demonstration? It was not made against a far-distant and prospective danger. It was assumed that the question of the Irish Church would immediately occupy the attention of the Legislature. A Defence Association was formed. It has been attempted to hold meetings all over Ireland, and especially throughout Ulster, in support of an institution which was so plainly threatened. But it is not Mr. GLADSTONE who first forces this question on the House of the Common men during the present Session. This



is done by your Ministry, who propose to establish a new Catholic University, intimate plainly that you wish to produce religious equality by leveling up, and seek to commit Parliament to a policy of universal and systematic endowment of the Catholic and Protestant Churches. Is the present House of the Common men morally competent to sanction the charter to this Catholic University, to endow it out of the public funds, and to increase the *Regium Donum*? You and your supporters must surely think so, for you ask this moribund House of the Common men to commence this leveling up system by the establishment of the Catholic University under the sanction of the State, and with the support of money supplied by the State; and it is known that some thirty Irish Tory Members met in the Langham Hotel and agreed to support the increase of the *Regium Donum*, which, too, Lord Mayo was also evidently inclined to favor. Mr. GLADSTONE, in obedience to the wishes of his most influential supporters in the House, simply asks the Parliament to hesitate before entering on the policy of universal endowment, and to give a pledge in favor of religious equality, in the only manner it can really be brought about, by declaring that the Irish Church ought to be disestablished. The second and third Resolutions logically follow from the first. If the House should accept the principle that the Church ought to be disestablished, "the origination of new personal interests by the exercise of any public patronage" would, of course, be highly inexpedient. "The humble address to her Majesty," as proposed by the third Resolution, to place "at the disposal of Parliament her interests in the temporalities of the archbishops, bishops, and other ecclesiastical dignities and benefices in Ireland and in the custodies thereof," is a formal and decorous acknowledgement of the Sovereign's prerogatives, which, however, can never really be exerted against the constitutional authority of the Parliament, to reform abuses, and to remove any great inequalities between different sections of her Majesty's subjects. Now that Mr. GLADSTONE has formally committed himself and his party to deal with this great question, Reformers must, of course, expect to hear some people, who cannot make up their minds to the great fact of his political leadership, depreciating the decisive policy on which he has entered.\*

\* The *Times* says much criticism has been wasted, and more will be wasted, on Mr. GLADSTONE's motion. It is inopportune, it is obscure. It is not abstract, it is not detailed, it ought to have been deferred. It would be much better if the cavillers were to imitate the conduct of Mr. DISRAELI. The Premier understands his own position, and the feeling of the House of Commons. We shall be surprised if he condescends to the weakness of complaint that Mr. GLADSTONE has brought his Irish policy to the test of a vote. On Monday night, at all events, he presented an admirable contrast to such pusillanimity. He treated Mr. GLADSTONE with frankness and dignity—in truth, it was evident that, if Mr. GLADSTONE meant to justify his position as leader of the Opposition, he was bound to provoke the encounter. From all sections of his followers—from old Whigs, economic jurists, Dissenting Radicals, and philosophers—Mr. Horsman, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Mill, there came one cry, and Mr. GLADSTONE had no choice but to put himself at the head of the movement, or to abdicate claim to lead at all. The *Times*, in conclusion, says the House of Commons may, and we trust will, declare with no hesitating voice, that the Irish Establishment, must cease to exist; but it will rightly remit to the Legislature appointed to succeed it the duty of confirming its opinion, and of pointing out the way of carrying it into effect. Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions mark an epoch of the utmost importance in Parliamentary history. It is conceded by common consent that they must divide statesmen and politicians into two clearly defined and distinct bodies. The difficulties of the crisis are so great that all attempts to aggravate them by unreal threats or pretences ought to be sternly repressed. It is



I have no doubt that persons who, had he hesitated and pursued a temporizing policy, would have condemned him for political cowardice, will now blame him for having entered boldly on the road which must lead to a great victory or to a great defeat. It may lead to both : but the defeat, if it occur, can be but temporary, and the ultimate crowning victory is certain. The Irish Establishment will not and cannot last. It is not to interfere with the discretion of the Parliament chosen under Household Suffrage now to enunciate a policy of disestablishment. On the contrary, it is to strengthen the hands of the House of the Common men that shall be chosen under an extended Suffrage ; for the policies of the two political parties will be clearly defined and the people will know for what they are voting. Even in the very Resolutions proposed by Mr. GLADSTONE, the " moral competence " of the new Parliament is expressly reserved. It is affirmed that no new personal interests shall be originated " pending the final decision of Parliament." You really seek to originate new personal and sectarian interests which must interfere with the final decision of Parliament, by setting up a new Catholic University, with endowments for professors, scholarships, and colleges. It will not be surprising, and it will be in harmony with your whole political career, if you now try to explain away not only Lord Mayo's speech, but your own explanation of that speech and policy, and seek to appeal to all the ignorance and fanaticism of the lowest classes of the Protestant population. Some of the sentences which recently fell from your lips have that tendency. Such tactics are not likely, however, to be successful. They will be found too late, just as much as the principle of indiscriminate endowments you advocated is utterly unsuited to the circumstances of the times in which we live, and for which we have to legislate. " Vivian Grey " going to the country on the cry, " The Church is in danger," would, indeed, be a spectacle almost sublime in its presumptive impudence and unscrupulous audacity.

The Church Establishment in Ireland then, appears to be doomed ; for although the question arising out of its endowment has been argued for many years, it was not made a rallying point of Political Science

due to Mr. DISRAELI to admit that he met Mr. GLADSTONE's notice of motion on Monday in a perfectly fair and statesmanlike spirit, and the *Times* trusts that, when responsible statesmen engage in the debate of next week, we shall have nothing of appeals to Protestant England, meaning thereby the condemned constituencies, on behalf of the Protestant Government, which proposes to charter and endow a Roman Catholic University. The suggestion will not bear the light of publicity, and the genuine defenders of the Irish Church are dishonored by the practices of their unscrupulous followers. The *Daily News* says the discussion on the policy of her Majesty's Government is over, and the discussion of the policy of the Opposition remains. Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions hold out hope to Ireland ; and while they promise prompt action upon the just principle which they lay down, they remove every obstacle to the exercise of a free discussion by the new constituencies, and the representatives whom they may choose. After what Mr. DISRAELI said on Monday night, it is scarcely possible that he would seek to influence the division by the threat of dissolving. The only inference of which his language admits is that he will provisionally acquiesce in Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions, should they be carried against him, and reserve his appeal for the general election and the new Parliament. The *Star* insists that the Liberal Parliament must not be content with declaring the doom of the Irish Church, but must take whatever steps are necessary to remove from power any Minister in favor of upholding the Irish Church grievance. The *Telegraph* says the pacification of Ireland, not the expulsion of the Ministry, is the object to be achieved, and it is immaterial whether the end be attained by the submission or by the defeat of Mr. DISRAELI.



until Mr. GLADSTONE, consistently with the liberal views which he has entertained for the last twenty years, declared that it must be wholly abolished. The Protestant Church in Ireland has always been a very great grievance to the vast majority of the Irish people, and there seems to be now an almost general concurrence of opinion that the time has arrived for its removal. You might possibly have veered round to the point taken up by Mr. GLADSTONE, if time had been allowed you for the "education" of your party on this question; but you are so clever, so cunning, so tricky, that if you were permitted to get comfortable in your seat, you might possibly contrive to reconcile the public by some of your odd, and not unpopular ways, to your continuance there; and to the continuance of the Church Establishment in Ireland, which the Liberal party have doomed. Therefore an effort must be made to oust you and so destroy all Tory expectations. The Tories will not allow it to be forgotten that when Mr. GLADSTONE sat on the Treasury Bench, in 1865, he took no decided step against the monster grievance of the Irish Church; but statesmen are not reluctant now to acknowledge the possibility of their becoming wiser to-day than they were yesterday, and since you became Premier Mr. GLADSTONE has concluded the Irish Church to be an abuse which cannot be allowed to remain uncorrected; and that it is only by the demolition of the Establishment that the peace of Ireland can be secured. His first Resolution, therefore, which contains the substance of the whole is "That in the opinion of this House it is necessary that the Established Church in Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment." It may be your misfortune that you are too slow in arriving at the same conviction as Mr. GLADSTONE. If time were allowed, your eyes might open also, and the two political gladiators might smile together over the work they had accomplished; but two Kings cannot reign in Downing street. In order that GLADSTONE may come in, it is necessary that you should go. But you have no mind to go; you would rather stay and be thankful; you have gained the height towards which your looks and your actions have been for thirty years directed; you have pressed onward against all sorts of discouraging circumstances; without a party and without friends; scorned on one side and chilled with faintest praise on the other, you have won the prize of a life's conflict, and you would like to keep it. But Mr. GLADSTONE forbids; and Mr. GLADSTONE is leader of the Opposition, whose majority on general questions of policy is known to be considerable. You can only defeat the movement against you by dividing this majority, and you take the matter so easily that one might think you felt assured of an easy victory; but a statesman's visage is a mask concealing his inward emotions, and you may be sure that Mr. GLADSTONE had looked over his forces and duly weighed their principles and opinions before laying his motion upon the table. The terms of that motion were discussed by the leading members of the Opposition before being finally agreed upon, in order not only that all Liberal members, Dissenters as well as Churchmen, might feel at liberty to vote for it, but also that the enemy, in his craftiness, might not find an opportunity of walking through it or turning it to his advantage. Simple as it looks, it is the result of long deliberations. There would, to a superficial observer, seem little or nothing in it; but it carries a double death in its innocent-looking bosom—death to your Administration, and then death to the Established Church in Ireland. It remains to be



seen what the Protestants in Ireland will say to a plan which disconnects them from the State, and puts their religion and its services under the voluntary system. That the Irish Church is obnoxious to a large majority of the Irish people is unquestionable, and it is equally indisputable that the wishes of the latter should be consulted. But it is not so clear that satisfactory legislation can be accomplished at a heat. If by the carrying of Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions the Irish Church could be abolished, and goodwill be established among the Irish people at the same time, its success would be a grand achievement; but the aspects allow only room for hope. Should you defeat the motion, the Irish Church will be perpetuated with all its abuses and inequalities, for Lord CAIRNS and Mr. HARDY, the clogs upon your liberal action, would assert their authority, with a Parliamentary majority to back them; and the disposition of our Literary Premier would be overborne. Favored by time, you might "educate" even your Lord Chancellor to take a liberal view of the Irish Church grievance, and lead him to the discovery that the Church property was not originally dedicated to ecclesiastical uses only. "At the first establishment of parochial clergy," says Blackstone, "the tithes of the parish were distributed in a four-fold division; one for the use of the bishop, another for maintaining the fabric of the Church, a third for the poor, and the fourth to provide for the incumbent." The wisdom of Parliament should be equal to the discovery of a means of relieving the majority of the Irish people from the burthen of an alien Church without violence to those for whose services it is preserved. But the wisdom of Parliament is only required to dismiss you. And as you are very unwilling to be dismissed, there will be a strong fight for ascendancy. Should the Resolutions be carried against you it is said by Ministerial partizans that you will not resign; "you will appeal to the country for its judgment." It is to be hoped, in that case, that the Irish and Scotch Reform Bills will be carried through Parliament before a dissolution takes place, for the country would be thrown into great confusion by the occurrence of two elections in one year. A general election merely to determine whether GLADSTONE or you should be Premier, when another must necessarily take place, in accordance with the Reform Act, in January next, would be a profligate waste of time and a source of great vexation throughout the country.

Apart from their great consequences, both in a party and historical sense, Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions are most significant. They are a noble protest against partizan dodges and motions made to catch votes. You have great courage, especially in invective; but not even the Author of "Vivian Grey" can dare to say that Mr. GLADSTONE has not raised the momentous issue of our time in a manly manner, admitting of no mistake. Had he followed the precedent set by Lord JOHN RUSSELL in 1835, he might have contented himself with an abstract condemnation of the Irish Church; but he asks the House to go beyond theory, and to pledge itself to the Irish people by an irreversible step. For the character of the Resolutions is such that, if adopted by the House, they must necessarily be followed by a Bill. It is something to have in our time a man who has the courage to act upon his own opinions,—who believes that politics are not words, but acts; and that men must not only preach Truth, but execute Justice. Mr. GLADSTONE may have faults; the Liberal party might discover, if they tried, some leader with greater subtlety of plan and greater ingenuity of device; but they



could not find any one who is more thoroughly honest, or more certain to ensure the final triumph of their cause. On two occasions the Liberals won office by abstract Resolutions which they surrendered when in power,—once when Lord JOHN RUSSELL relinquished the policy of the Appropriation Clause, and once when Lord PALMERSTON retained as a Tory the place he had won by a Resolution in favor of Reform. The people of Britain know by Mr. GLADSTONE'S previous career, from the day when he quitted office under PEELE to the day when in 1866 he retired sooner than accept a mutilated Bill, that any Resolution which he proposes is "meant to win." That which he has now propounded obviously compels the passing of a new Act without delay; and so soon as such an Act has passed, the Irish Church begins to die. From that day the vacancies which may occur in bishoprics and Crown livings will remain unfilled; the gradual dilapidation of the great political fortress, miscalled a Church, will have begun; and Parliament will be compelled to clear away the rubbish and build up anew some national Irish institution not founded on violence nor continued as a standing wrong. No Tory Ministry can accept the Resolutions in the hope of paltering with them in a double sense. There may be weak-kneed Liberals, who regret Mr. GLADSTONE'S honesty and boldness, who would prefer to have their flag waved gently in the enemy's face, not nailed to the mast: but honesty is the best policy; courage will have its reward; the whole Nation will applaud a man who despises the petty tactics of mere party leaders, and who finds in Justice the watchword of final success. Such an act lifts us out of the old tepid Tea-room atmosphere into a freer air. It may seem to many that actual good can scarcely flow from a merely negative Resolution,—a merely repealing Act. But, in fact, England and Scotland have ruled Ireland so badly that the best boon statesmen can bestow is *not* to do something which they are now doing daily, with calamitous results. Some persons have a vague idea that the Irish Church is an old, self-supporting, self-acting institution, which goes on, probably unjustly, or probably with bad effect, yet without actively involving the Government of the day,—that it is a great and venerable fabric the warders of which only cry out "Let us alone." But the institution that now finds no one to say, "God bless it," and that is sunk so low as to have few respectable defenders, is nothing of the kind. It is an active, living corporation, ruled by the Ministry of Britain, and vigorously recruited from time to time. Not a month, hardly a week, passes by in which the British Viceroy does not appoint a Protestant clergyman, with a licence to take care of the souls of some twenty or thirty Protestants at the expense of some three or four thousand despoiled Papists. There is not a single Prime Minister of our day who has not appointed at least one bishop to fatten on the funds drawn from Irish land. When Irish Protestant bishops and clergymen say, "Let us alone," they forget that if statesmen do let them alone they will die. It is the constant action of statesmen in making new appointments that keeps up the succession of ecclesiastical oppressors "cumbering the ground:" statesmen have but to hold their hand, and, as the living incumbents gradually disappear, the great public nuisance of a State Church will also gradually go away. That is what Mr. GLADSTONE now asks at the Nation's hands. What he demands does not even amount to a positive act of Justice; it is simply a promise not to commit any more acts of injustice. We are, if we accept his advice,



merely to "cease to do evil;" the other part of the lesson, "learn to do well," he has not yet imposed. And are we to be told that this is too much to ask from the Liberal party, commanding as they do a clear majority of the House? Are they to approve by their vote, the perpetuation of that corporate alien who stands between the Irish people and the Justice they have so often demanded from Britain with their blood and with their tears? Is the Crown to persevere, almost day by day, in appointing young parsons "to wring from the hard hands of peasants their vile trash, by any indirection?"—rent-charge or what not,—and is her Majesty to appoint new bishops whose lives will be the measure of the continuance of iniquity and oppression? Are the few,—very few,—trimmers and traitors within our camp to prevail when they say that to arrest the hand of the wrong-doer is "rather too much,"—that to check the renewal of injustice is "very precipitate,"—that merely to stand between Ireland and new insults is to "commit the House" too hastily and too far? One thing is clear,—the Nation will understand the situation. I believe that, even in politics, Mr. GLADSTONE has laid down a course from which, even if he wished it, he and his party cannot swerve. If he attains office in consequence of success he must act at once on the policy which the Resolutions proclaim; they are no abstract ideas that can be conveniently set aside. This pledge of his own fearless and uncompromising honesty will tell trumpet-tongued for him and against his opponents. Italy advanced to victory under a *Rè Galantuomo*; the Liberal party has a leader who, by this thorough-going plan of action, shows himself an honest man. Nothing, therefore, need check the order for the removal of this Imperial nuisance, the Irish Church. Reformers have compared that Church to a building perpetually repaired by the action of the Crown; but it might be better likened to one of those cairns which are built in some countries as rude memorials of a great crime, and which by degrees would crumble away, were it not that every casual traveler adds a stone to the heap. The Irish Church is a memorial of our forefathers' crimes,—a standing insult to the proscribed race. Every new appointment keeps it still standing,—a rude, coarse remembrancer of past English oppression and a result of continued English wrong. The House is now asked to assert that the alien Establishment which has been so productive of misunderstanding and discord may henceforth cease; nor will it withhold an emphatic assent to that resolve. Mr. GLADSTONE's first Resolution carries conquest in its nature and in its tone; nor could the Liberal party have a nobler leader than one who on the clear issue has manfully staked his character and his career.

You have written a "Durham Letter."\* The crisis of England, you assert, as well as the crisis of Ireland, is at hand. A powerful party has, you tell us, avowed that it seeks to destroy "that sacred union between Church and State which has hitherto been the chief means of our civilization, and is the only security for our religious liberty." I congra-

\* Yesterday you addressed the following letter to the Earl of Dartmouth, President of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations:—"10, Downing-street, March 24, 1868. My Lord—I have received with pride and gratitude the memorial of the Council of the National Union and of the Constitutional Associations connected with that body, in which they express their confidence in me, and their thorough determination to support, by all means in their power, the Government which I have formed by the command and with the approval of her



tulate you on this masterpiece of insinuation. Separate, you virtually say, the Church from the State in Ireland, and Roman Catholicism will, with giant strides, begin to regain the position from which it was cast down three hundred years ago. Encourage Roman Catholicism in Ireland, and it will receive new life in England. The Jesuits will get back their old power. Oxford and Cambridge will fall a prey to their wiles. The Church will be corrupted. The priest will once more exercise his hated despotism over English households. Thus all the detested tyranny of Rome will again flourish on English soil, because, prompted by an unscrupulous passion for power, Mr. GLADSTONE is determined to destroy one of the great Protestant strongholds. Every Englishman who hates Popery, who hates persecution, and who loves household purity, should therefore rally round the Government, and save the Irish Church. Such is your appeal, and a wilder appeal has seldom been made by a British statesman. Between the Irish and English Church there is no more resemblance than there is between the Episcopalians of England and the Cameronians of Scotland. Thirty years ago it might as well have been argued that, if we gave an independent Parliament to Canada, we should be bound to confer the same Institution on Scotland; that having conferred it on Scotland; we should next have to confer it on Wales; that, having bestowed it on Wales, we should next have to bestow it on Yorkshire; that, having thus favored Yorkshire, we should be forced to grant a similar distinction to the rest of the chief English counties; and thus that half-a-dozen years would bring back England to the condition of the Heptarchy. Statesmen should be above preaching such nonsense to the Nation. You in particular, should be above it, when you know what fountains of prejudice you are striving to unlock. Great part of your life has been spent, and most honorably spent, in battling against religious prejudice. You know better than almost any other man, how strong, how unreasonable that prejudice often is in England. And, as you are well aware, of all the prejudices which sway the uneducated people of this country, that against the religion of Rome is the most bitter. Nor, with the history of Britain before me, can I say that the animosity is groundless. But, remembering the GORDON riots of London, and the faction fights of Ireland, a true British statesman should shrink from raising the cry of "No Popery" as he would shrink from giving the signal for a civil war. We must have no mob legislation. London must not be lighted to a right conclusion by the blaze of burning chapels. If the Irish Church is founded on Justice, let it stand. If, on the other hand, it is founded on injustice, if it is a badge of oppression, if for centuries it has cursed Ireland with a disquiet which has required the repressive force of ten thousand men, then we must not be guided by claptraps about Protestant ascendancy, but must declare that, as a State Church, the Irish Establishment must cease to exist. Fortunately, we do not lack examples of the spirit in which we should act. At Limerick, the Roman Catholic gentry and clergy of Ireland have made a demonstra-

Majesty. Such expressions of feeling on the part of influential bodies of my countrymen are encouraging and opportune. We have heard something lately of the crisis of Ireland. In my opinion the crisis of England is rather at hand; for the purpose is now avowed—and that by a powerful party—of destroying that sacred union between Church and State which has hitherto been the chief means of our civilization, and is the only security for our religious liberty.—I have the honor to remain, my Lord, yours sincerely,—B. DISRAELI."



tion in opposition to that which was recently made by the Protestant gentry and clergy at Dublin. And the contrast between the rival meetings is striking. The Church Defence Association foully calumniated their own Church by speaking as if Protestantism meant a religion founded on an Act of Parliament, as if in Ireland that religion could not exist without a protective duty of half a million pounds a year, and as if the State were bound to make Ireland something like a hell upon earth in order to protest against the idolatry of the mass. At Limerick the language was very different. There the professors of the purer creed received from the members of the less pure a signal rebuke. No bigoted word was uttered. No attempt was made to vilify Protestantism. On the contrary, in the name of the meeting, Lord DUNRAVEN disavowed any antagonism with the members of the Established Church, and expressed his high esteem for its pastors. He did not demand even that the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland should take the place of the Protestant as an Establishment. All that he required was, that the creed of the many should be placed on an equality with the creed of the few. Such a speech is an eloquent rebuke, alike to the frenzied fanaticism of the Defence Association and to the laboriously dramatic Protestantism of our literary Prime Minister. Nor does that speech stand alone for your instruction and reproof. If you look to Russia and to Austria, you should at once see how you ought not, and how you ought, to behave during the present crisis. Each of these countries has her Ireland. Russia has chosen the strong hand of repression as the instrument of peace. To the demands of Poland she would not listen, but told the people that they must either become Russians or die. Already Poland has disappeared from the map, and its conquerors are destroying the very language of the people. That is one method of repression, but it is not the method which Britain can choose. A far different plan has been chosen by Austria, which has at last resolved to govern Hungary in accordance with the wishes of the Hungarian people, and which is already reaping her reward in such contentment as the old school of statesmen never expected to witness. Profiting by the new tranquillity, Austria has fought and won a great battle over priestly power, and has gone far to establish religious equality among her people. We British are now asked to fight and win a similar battle. We have to conquer a stronghold of ecclesiastical injustice, founded in days when men did not know what religious freedom meant; and we have to bestow the unexampled blessing of religious equality on a people whom we have governed with such perverse skill, that Protestantism,—the religion of equality,—has, in their eyes, come to mean the symbol of religious oppression. Austria has recently set us an illustrious example. Once the stronghold of religious bigotry, she is now teaching free, Protestant Britain the great lesson taught to rulers by the Reformation,—the lesson that in the eyes of the State, men of all religions are equal, and that the State has no right to force even the truest religion upon any people against their will. I wish I could believe that the lesson had been thoroughly learned by every member of the “governing classes” in our own land. But it is difficult to cherish any such hope when I hear the language which is used in high places. At an Orange Lodge I do not look for a display of calm logic, and I am not surprised to hear arguments which have been dragged from the lowest abysses of fanatical hate. But the House of the Lords,—that is, the House of



the Uncommon men,—is not an Orange Lodge. That august assembly might be expected to present an example of high-minded tolerance. Hence I read with pain such a debate as that on the Ecclesiastical Titles Act. Since the day when, in the reign of WILLIAM III, the House of the Common men tried to stop a wholesale system of plunder by passing the impotent resolution that the holders of office under the Crown should not receive more than £500 a year, that House has been guilty of nothing more foolish than the passing of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act. The measure was passed in a frenzy of fanaticism and fright. It was allowed to drop out of sight on the morning of bitter repentance which followed the night of the sectarian debauch. Most of the men who supported the Bill are now so heartily ashamed of the work, that they would, if they could, blot the record of their blunder from the Statute Book. The Reformers of Britain might have expected, therefore, that in the House of the Lords not a word would now be said in defence of the mistake. And the expectation is so far satisfied by the terms in which the Act was characterized by some of the peers on Thursday night, when Lord STANHOPE proposed that it should be referred to a select committee. Lord STANHOPE himself frankly confessed that, in voting for it, he had done wrong; and even Tories like Lord CLANRICARDE, Lord CAIRNS, and Lord MALMESBURY did not deny that it had been mischievous, and that it must be repealed. But Lord REDESDALE was true to his Toryism, and the Duke of SOMERSET was false to his Liberalism; for both stubbornly expressed their unrepentance, and contended that the Act must still be maintained. And why? Because, says Lord REDESDALE, it is a protest against the Pope's assumption of power to call one clerical gentleman the Archbishop of WESTMINSTER, another the Bishop of SOUTHWARK, and a third the Bishop of CLIFTON. Because adds his lordship, if the Pope may confer such titles, he may grant British subjects dispensations with regard to certain marriages, and may thus allow an uncle to marry his niece: Because, adds the Duke of SOMERSET, the Roman Catholic titles are an outrage on the dignity of the Crown and on the Protestant feelings of the country. That is, to prevent one old gentleman from calling another old Gentleman by a big name which nobody need use unless he likes, and to prevent the same old gentleman from sanctioning a marriage which the law of Britain will not recognize, we must decree that the old gentleman who wears the title shall be fined £100, and we must allow that law to remain a dead letter. Was a more preposterous argument ever uttered in a legislative assembly? Yet this, it seems, is the sort of arguments on which you rely. You will, however, be disappointed. Whatever response Orange fanaticism may give to your appeal, the intelligence of the Nation will not be beguiled by a weak copy of the Durham letter into the irreparable blunder of supporting the Irish Church Establishment.

In the great Parliamentary campaign which will be inaugurated by the House of the Common men, on next Monday evening, it is well that the first battle should be fought on the broad and direct issue raised by Lord STANLEY's amendment. Estimated at its true value, the proposition put forth by the noble lord is equivalent to a motion in support of "the previous question," accompanied by certain expressions in favor of "modifications" which are so vague that they may tend to weaken rather than to strengthen the Parliamentary method of procedure which the Foreign Secretary has thought fit to adopt. The



common sense of the House, however, is seldom, if ever, over-weighted by the details and intricacies of debate, and the question upon which the first division will be taken, in reality amounts to this:—Is the admission that considerable modifications in the temporalities of the United Church in Ireland *may*, after a pending inquiry, appear to be expedient, more satisfactory under existing circumstances than Mr. GLADSTONE's uncompromising assertion that as a State Church the Protestant Establishment in Ireland must cease to exist? Those who are acquainted with the present temper of the House of the Common men, and with the general state of Public opinion, will find little difficulty in answering the question. Whatever Lord STANLEY may have to say with regard to the form of action which the Liberal party has determined upon adopting—and he will doubtless have much to say that will be worthy of attention—his amendment will be negatived, and the ground will be cleared for the discussion of the grand principle which the leader of the Opposition has embodied in his first Resolution. With a promptitude almost unparalleled in the annals of political discussion, the enlightened opinion of the Nation has already declared itself in favor of Mr. GLADSTONE's conclusion; and so far as it is possible to anticipate the results of a Parliamentary struggle involving such great and important interests, I may safely assume that a Liberal majority will support the cause which has been so ably and courageously championed by the member for South Lancashire. This result, which must ensue if the members of the Opposition are true to their faith and to their party, will be in itself a grand gain and a new source of strength to a body of Representatives already too long mistrusted and disorganized. Mr. GLADSTONE will once more stand forth as the active and successful leader of the Liberals; whilst his followers will have deservedly regained the approval of their constituents and the confidence of the Nation. The cause of Reform in Ireland,—of such Reform as will assuage the miseries produced by misgovernment and neglect, and carry the promise of peace and contentment to every district of a suffering land,—will remain in the hands of Mr. GLADSTONE, and of those who follow him in his mission of mercy and of justice. But the fate of the second and third Resolutions is not so easily discerned. They involve, without doubt, questions of grave legal and constitutional importance; they afford a plausible ground for debate to such of the “weak-kneed” brethren as the Liberals have the misfortune to number in their ranks; and they are bound up with the issue which some of that fraternity consider important—whether or not the present Government is to remain in power and finish the work of the Session. It is for these grounds that I cannot for the moment augur any result beyond the passing of the first Resolution. And, should Mr. GLADSTONE's efforts be productive of that result alone, he will have little cause for regret. Reformers, who have unfliningly sustained the demand for ecclesiastical equality, would gladly welcome the action implied by the propositions as they stand; but whatever may be the issue of the debate which will commence on the evening of Monday first, the final abolition of the Established Church in Ireland as it now exists, is the cause which the Opposition have most earnestly in view. With the passing of the first Resolution the doom of the unjust Protestant ascendancy will be sealed, and the eloquent and energetic speech of the Liberal Leader will have received the most practical endorsement from the Parliament of Britain and from the popular



opinion of the Empire. Meanwhile it is worthy of notice that the policy which Mr. GLADSTONE now asks the House of the Common men to approve, is one which he has consistently advocated for upwards of twenty years. Those who declare that his present attack upon the Irish Establishment is a novelty or an after-thought say what is simply untrue. In the great debate on the second reading of the Maynooth College Bill, which was moved by Sir ROBERT PEEL, in April, 1845, the present leader of the Opposition supported the motion by arguments so bold for the temper of the time as to rouse the ire of the extreme "Protestant" party. "I think," said he, "that common honesty binds us to admit the Roman Catholics of Ireland to be free to urge their claims against the State upon a *footing of equality with other religious bodies.*" Seizing hold of the unwonted avowal, many opponents of Sir ROBERT PEEL insinuated that he favored the liberal doctrines of his younger colleague; on which Mr. GLADSTONE declared that he spoke only for himself, but he reiterated, in explicit terms, the doctrine of religious equality in Ireland. "He felt that the acceptance of this measure would put out of the way, and dispose of, the religious objection to the further measure of the payment of the clergy. He could not conceal from himself that if he voted for that Bill in the present Session he could not in a future Session profess, on the ground of a religious scruple, to oppose the payment of the clergy of that Church." Such were the notable words uttered on the 17th of April, 1845; and from the position that Mr. GLADSTONE then took he has never swerved. Party spirit will impute to the Liberal chief all kinds of evil designs and devices, but even the frenzy of placemen will not attribute to him the impracticable feat of forging or tampering with the back volumes of HANSARD. It would be an almost endless task to cite all the occasions in the last score of years on which the leader of the Liberal party has foreshadowed the doom of the Parliamentary institution which usurps the name of a National Church. Let me refer to the course of the debate on Mr. DILLWYN's motion in March, 1865, "That in the opinion of this House the present position of the Irish Church Establishment is unsatisfactory, and calls for the early attention of her Majesty's Government." Mr. GLADSTONE, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord PALMERSTON's Government, declared that the acceptance of the principle involved in the motion was merely a question of time. "What," said he, "is the position of the Irish Church Establishment? It is this:—In a nation of five or six millions of people, about 600,000 or 700,000 have the exclusive possession of the ecclesiastical property of the country *intended to be applied to the religious instruction of all.*" And here I touch the point on which the right honorable gentleman has mainly relied throughout the long controversy,—that revenues enjoyed by a comparatively small sect were originally bestowed for the benefit of the whole people of Ireland,—that the charge of spoliation rests or points, not against those who would distribute the fund, but against those who strive to perpetuate its sectarian character. "I am bound to say," he continued, in answer to a previous speaker, "that I must differ from the doctrine to which the honorable member appears to incline, that the Protestants in Ireland, or the members of the Established Church in any one of the three kingdoms, are solely entitled to have provision made for their spiritual wants without any regard being paid to the requirements of the remaining portion of the population. Neither our Constitution nor our history will warrant such a conclusion."



“It is not,” he afterwards remarked, “too hastily to be assumed that the exclusive and peculiar position of the Irish Established Church is to be regarded as necessarily useful to the progress of Protestantism. No doubt it relieves members of the Protestant Church in a great degree from the duty and business of making provision for their own spiritual requirements ; but it is a mistake to suppose that the exclusive establishment of one religion is, in all circumstances, favorable to the progress of that religion.” It would be tedious to cull from this remarkable speech all the passages which point to the ultimate dissolution of the statutory establishment ; enough has already been cited to show that Mr. GLADSTONE preaches to-day the doctrine which he has unswervingly advocated in the House of the Common men for a quarter of a century, and which he has never hesitated to avow, even in circumstances of great difficulty, when he was the colleague of such reserved statesmen as Sir ROBERT PEEL and Lord PALMERSTON. People who profess to be surprised at the pending Resolutions must find it politic to ignore the debate on Sir JOHN GRAY’s motion of May the 7th last year, and the strong animadversions which Mr. GLADSTONE then pronounced upon the shameful ecclesiastical abuses perpetrated in Ireland. Sir JOHN GRAY asked the House to resolve itself into committee “to consider the temporalities of the Established Church in Ireland.” At that time Reformers were in the very thick of the Reform fight, and Mr. GLADSTONE knew that it was hopeless to invite Parliament to consider Hibernian grievances ; but nothing could be more distinct than the denunciation of the Irish Establishment which he then uttered. “Even if a Church were not the Church of the mass of the people,” he said, “you might perhaps maintain it, if it were the Church of the mass of the poorer portion of the population. Is that the case in Ireland ? No ; then the religion of the Established Church is the religion of the few. You cannot, therefore, maintain the Established Church in Ireland on the ground of truth, on the ground that it is the church of the mass of the population, or on the ground that it is the Church of the mass of the poorer portion of the population.” The whole speech was a powerful indictment against the religious ascendancy which Acts of Parliament have imposed upon millions of the people of Ireland. In indignant terms Mr. GLADSTONE asked whether “Englishmen or Scotchmen would tolerate in their respective countries such a state of things as exists in Ireland ?” And yet, after denouncing the Irish Establishment for more than twenty years, the leader of the Liberal party is designated by the Tories a factious politician who has suddenly taken up the cause of religious equality in order to serve the purposes of a party ! The truth is, however, that his Resolution for the disestablishment of the Irish Church expresses the conviction of a lifetime. Moreover, it expresses the conviction to which the people of Britain have come, and which the Parliament of Britain will affirm.

On the eve of the great political struggle round the walls of the Irish Established Church it may be well fairly to estimate the numbers and influence of the Irish Protestants who are still ready to support the condemned institution. Great misconceptions to which the Irish Tory Press give the utmost encouragement prevail upon this subject. They are cordially shared by you, as shown in your speech the other week, and they are industriously repeated by your partizan organs throughout the nation. You said last Monday week—“Sir, in my opinion, a policy in Ireland of conciliation, which is to commence



by outraging the feelings and humiliating the pride of one million and a half of men, the most intelligent and wealthy and high-spirited, is not a wise policy." These words were received with Ministerial cheers. Now, of all men at this day, it surely is of the utmost importance that the British Prime Minister, whoever he may be, should have accurate ideas of the facts, before committing himself to a policy which he seeks to defend by menacing and inflammatory language. You are, however, utterly wrong in your facts. There are not a million and a half of Irish Protestants whose feelings will be outraged by removing the Establishment known as the State Church, on the principle of religious equality; there are not one million of these men so ready to take offence at a tardy act of justice; there are not, as I shall presently show, even half a million of such uncompromising fire-eaters. The first condition for a just solution of the problem about to be submitted to the Legislature is correct knowledge; and you to whom it so immediately concerns that you should know well what you are doing, it is lamentable, therefore, that you are in a state of complete ignorance. The language you used is based on the popular English theory that all Ulster is Protestant, and that all Ulster is fanatically devoted to the maintenance of the Irish Established Church. Now, Ulster is not all Protestant. The Catholics are now a majority in this so-called Protestant province, the relative proportions being as fifty-one to forty-nine. The Protestants are, therefore, barely one half of the population; and, if considered now as one half, it may be confidently affirmed that not one-fourth will regard the disestablishment of the Protestant Episcopalian Church as a grievance. The census of 1861 is not an unerring index of the present condition of Ireland. The population has since then diminished in proportions pretty nearly equal; and I need not remind you that the emigration has, as Lord Dufferin insists, been as extensive in Ulster as in two other Irish provinces. The data supplied by the census of 1861\* are quite sufficient, however, to demolish

\* "There is no need for any further information on the question of the Irish Church before legislating, as everything is only too well known for the Irish Establishment and its advocates in Parliament," says one of the leading London daily papers of yesterday. "The census of 1861 showed the population of Ireland to be rather over five and a half millions. Out of that number, more than four and a half millions were Catholics, while over half-a-million were Presbyterians. The adherents of the Established Church in Ireland numbered only 693,357. To state the case in a different form, the members of the Protestant Establishment formed only 11.9 per cent. of the gross population, while the Catholics numbered 77.7 per cent., and the Presbyterians 9.0 per cent.—the other Protestant denominations being only 1.4 per cent. The adherents of the Establishment in Ireland are, therefore, little more than a tithe of the great body of the population. A Commission is presently sitting to inquire into the revenues of the Church; but information on that point is already pretty full and accurate. We know that the nett yearly revenue of the Church exceeds £600,000. Of that sum £55,110 are spent on the archbishoprics and bishoprics, and nearly £400,000 on the benefices, the remainder being money spent by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the rest on palaces, parsonages, &c. In many of the parishes in Ireland there is not a single adherent of the Establishment to be found, and to conceal as far as possible this anomaly, several parishes are included in one benefice. Thus we are told 'the benefice of Ardelare, in the diocese of Elphin, consists of three parishes, the respective Church populations of which are 5, 2, and 7, total 14; the benefice of Kilcorkey, in the same diocese, consists of two parishes, of the respective Church populations of 0 and 3, total 3; the benefice of Dononaughta, in the diocese of Clonfert, consists of seven parishes, the respective Church populations of which are 97, 20, 9, 14, 17, 33, and 41, total 231; the benefice of Haretown, in the diocese of Ferns, consists of eight parishes, the respective Church populations of which are 66, 44, 0, 13, 0, 0, 42, 10, total 175; the



your assumptions and those of the obedient Tory Press. In 1861 the people in Ireland of the Established Church numbered 693,357; the Presbyterians were 523,291; and other Protestant Dissenters, including the Wesleyan Methodists, amounted to 76,661. By no system of enumeration could the Protestants of Ireland of every denomination be made, in 1861, to amount to a million and a half of the people; and, at the present day, it may be doubted whether the number is much more than a million. But it is absurd to set down that million as devoted to the Established Church. It has been conclusively shown by the Liberal Press of this country that the late demonstrations throughout Ireland were principally composed of the members of the Establishment; that the Presbyterians and Wesleyan Methodists took, with very few, and generally very insignificant exceptions indeed, no part in the recent agitation. On the question whether religious equality is to be produced by general endowment of all persuasions, as recommended by you and Lord Mayo, or by the mere disestablishment of the Irish Church, as advised by Mr. GLADSTONE and the Liberal party, there can be no doubt whatever that the Protestant Dissenters in Ireland will not even be passive and apathetic. They will take a decided and energetic part in support of the course recommended by Mr. GLADSTONE and Mr. BRIGHT. The Government over which you preside have themselves formally abandoned the principle of ascendancy. Why should the Nonconformists be expected to adopt a policy which, by endowing all religions, surrenders every Protestant principle in favor of an Establishment, and of which the actuating motive is the preservation of the revenues of the Church to the rich landed gentry, their favorites, and their dependents? At the next census it may be doubted whether the Establishment will be found to have five hundred thousand actual members in Ireland. It is well known that the system of enumeration adopted gives great advantage to the Establishment in swelling its returns. Every person who does not make a positive profession of being of other religious denominations is unhesitatingly put down a member of the State Church, though there are many people in the list who have never entered into communion with that Church, and are quite indifferent to it and to all its pretensions. It would be doing great injustice to many sincere members of the Establishment in Ireland to represent them as ready to support it according to the principle of ascendancy. There are many intelligent Liberal Episcopalian Protestants even in Ulster; and they will be glad to see their Church contending on equal terms with the Churches of other persuasions, and divested of an invidious and untenable supremacy. Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions have, in every point of view, the great merit of rendering the issue to be placed before the new electors, clear and intelligible to the meanest capacity. They will render the course

benefice of Kilcoglan, in the diocese of Kilmacdaugh, consists of nine parishes, of the respective Church populations of 7, 0, 0, 0, 10, 8, 10, 1, 0, total 36. The value of the last-named benefice is £413.' In all Ireland there are 199 *parishes* (not benefices be it remarked), where there are no Church Protestants; 575 parishes, each containing not more than 20 members of the Established Church; 416 parishes containing 20, and not more than 50, members of the Established Church; and 349 containing more than 50, and not more than 100 members of the Establishment. As regards *benefices*, tables have been published showing that there are 443 of them with less than one hundred members of the State Church. The total Church membership of these 443 benefices is 20,396; and the aggregate nett revenue is £97,903, giving an average nett rate of £221 for each benefice, and an average cost per head of £4 16s."



of future Ministers and leaders of Opposition direct and unmistakable, For this very cause, however, they are peculiarly obnoxious to you, whose course has never been straightforward; who says one thing and means another; who mistakes intrigue for statesmanship; and who, in playing off Members against each other in the "House," is forgetful of the Nation and of any cause in which earnest and conscientious men can believe. Dismissing for the present occasion the frivolous and mocking style of the speech you made on Monday, when you came forward in a grave and apparently earnest manner to assure the Leader of the Opposition that you would give him every facility for the discussion of the Resolutions, which, whether they be carried or not at the present time, cannot but gravely affect the existence of the Irish Establishment. They are no laughing matter, as even the clergymen of the Established Church here know very well. You did not consider them a laughing matter. But, in replying to Mr. GLADSTONE's request for a day, you resumed your style of mock humility, and affected deference to the "House." Mr. GLADSTONE was in the hands of the "House." It was the "House" that would sit in judgment on the Resolutions. It was the "House" that would determine when and how they should be discussed. You put yourself forward as the interpreter of the "House" as against Mr. GLADSTONE. You wished to make it understood that the Leader of the Opposition was but an individual Member, and not the Leader of a great party, and of a considerable majority, even in that "House," of which you professed to be, as the Speaker of old, in answer to CHARLES the First, only the eyes, the ears, and the tongue. Your cunning allusions to the "House" occur not less than sixteen times in the short reply you gave to Mr. GLADSTONE on Monday night.

It is evident that it suits your purpose to prevent your "House" from coming to an independent and unbiased opinion on the important political question at issue. The Irish Church is acknowledged to be in so desperate a position that any hopes of warding off an emphatic condemnation of it, by a House not supposed to be the most liberal and earnest that has been chosen during this generation, depend on keeping before it a threat of a sudden termination of its existence in the middle of this Session. Last year, the Liberal members were told that, if they did not accept a most unsatisfactory redistribution scheme, which, as every one now acknowledges, has left the whole question open for the Reformed Parliament to deal with, they would not have the liberal reduction of the Franchise contained in the new English Reform Act. Now they are told that, if they support Mr. GLADSTONE in an unequivocal declaration of Irish policy, in order that the new electors may, when called upon, have an opportunity of expressing fully their verdict upon it, the labors of the Session shall be interrupted, and a moribund House shall, for no conceivable object whatever, be sent to meet its equally moribund constituencies. Was there ever anything more audacious than the employment of such menaces? This is not a case in which an Administration finds itself suddenly deprived of the confidence of the House of the Common men, and therefore feels it imperative either to resign or to appeal to the Nation. Your Administration never has had the confidence of the Nation. It undertook, under the close surveillance of the House, to do a work which the Tory party, aided by some insincere Liberals, had prevented Mr. GLADSTONE and the late Government from doing. But



it has only been able to accomplish this task in a partial and bungling manner by abandoning many of the highest Ministerial functions to the House. It is not a question whether the Nation shall or shall not be appealed to. Within a very short time, indeed, the representatives of the people must not only face their present constituents, but the new constituents. The passing of the Resolutions by the House of the Common men, cannot therefore render your position more unsettled than it now is. You know that you have not a majority. If you were, by a premature dissolution, to have a majority returned for you by the present constituencies, that affirmation would not render your tenure of office less precarious. If that appeal were unfavorable to you, another dissolution soon afterwards would still be necessary and indispensable. A dissolution at the present time could, therefore, have no political effect whatever. It could answer no useful purpose. The menace of it is essentially dishonest; and if the attempt were seriously made to execute it, then, it could easily be frustrated. Besides, a majority that shall pass Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions can also prevent you from carrying this threat into effect. A dissolution at the beginning of the Parliamentary season can never take place. The Budget must be produced; the Supplies must be voted; The Appropriation Bill must be passed. These proceedings all require some time. It cannot be difficult also to pass, with them, the Scotch and Irish Reform Bills, that the new constituencies may be complete. As the House, with the Supplies unvoted, and as yet the Mutiny Bill not passed, has it in its power to prevent a dissolution at the present time, it would be bound to exercise that power, and refuse, even at some inconvenience to the Nation, to afford any facilities to a Minister, like you, capable of acting so desperately and shamelessly. But the threat is not seriously intended. It is put forward to afford the lukewarm Liberals an excuse for deserting their Leader on the plea of public convenience. The British people shall be again told that it would be wrong to throw the Nation into confusion on the issue of the Irish Church, when, in fact, the only person who can throw the Nation into confusion on this question is the Minister who would think of dissolving Parliament at present, and of appealing to the old constituencies on a policy which the new constituencies only can negative or affirm. The time is ripe for the great change, and no Government, however strong or obstinate, can resist what the voice of three Nations loudly demands. The Tories would, if they could, uphold the Institution which is a disgrace to the Government, as well as a wrong to the governed; but the awakened intelligence of the people will not brook either compromise or delay.

I am, dear Sir, as you may observe, in continuation, as unsparing in criticizing your Protean conduct, as I am sincerely desirous of imparting to you that political knowledge which may show you, that, after all, honesty of purpose is one of the best elements of even a Literary Prime Minister's policy,

JOHN SCOTT.



## L E T T E R   I X.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
*March 27th, 1868.*

JOHN BRIGHT, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—On next Monday will commence one of the most important Parliamentary battles of the century,—which will put the members of the House of the Common men to a severe and practical test,—which will strongly affect the first elections under the new Reform Bill,—which will materially modify the constitution and objects of parties, and exercise a powerful influence on the condition of Ireland. The Defence Associations are only making the doomed Establishment more odious, and weakening more and more the scanty power of the Ministry. The fierce, intolerant spirit displayed at those anti-Christian meetings must convince honest men of every form of religion of the pressing necessity of removing for ever the fruitful source of civil dissensions and sectarian feuds. Nor are some of the members of the Tory Cabinet themselves deficient in the artifices by which the timid are swayed, and the wavering secured. Industrious reports of dissolution are circulated, and visions of imaginary danger to the Constitution are conjured up with all the extravagant embellishment of cunning fancy ; and no weapon that can aid the failing cause is left untried. The insolent and tyrannical factions who would fain make a sport of the fortunes and liberties of their fellow-men, have made the friends of freedom and equality more determined and united in disarming them. When the cause of discord is removed, tranquillity and peace must follow ; those dissensions by which the people of Ireland are rent asunder would cease ; that spirit of virulence which fills the minds of men with diabolical desires would soon die out. The defenders of the Establishment seek the ascendancy of a sect ; the friends of freedom only seek the ascendancy of Justice. They cannot submit any longer to the galling, unnatural ascendancy of a crew of fanatics, who, if left to themselves, would plunge the Nation into mourning and bloodshed. Bigots are not to dictate law to Parliament, or plant the iron heel of tyranny on the necks of millions. Such fanatics, whilst they mingle ribaldry with profanity, rouse the disgust and horror of every good man. And, should Mr. GLADSTONE succeed in dismantling the doomed Irish Church, effecting a great national reconciliation, and placing all on a footing of perfect equality, he will win a renown which neither envy, nor time, nor malice, nor prejudice, nor ingratitude can ever dim. Mr. GLADSTONE and his party are not fighting for place, for they know that deception can be no longer practised with impunity, and if the Irish people are to be still the dupes of political knaves, their avenging genius, clutching ten thousand thunders, will issue forth from a misty speck in the West. Let Justice be done to Ireland and peace will follow,—let the dove be sent out and she will bring back the olive. The speech of Mr. GLADSTONE on the Irish debate heralds happier days to Ireland. A speech by the greatest of living orators and statesmen, must always raise high expectations, and excite intense interest among all classes of her Majesty's subjects. The most staunch opponents of Mr. GLADSTONE acknowledge with a sneer, which enhances the value of their praise, that among the Liberals he stands alone in genius, eloquence, and learning, but that he sacrifices to party



the brilliant talents with which Nature has gifted him. It was evident that he purposed to make a great effort on the evening of the 16th of March, nor did he fail of success. He even surpassed himself on that occasion, and cheer after cheer rang through the House as words of knowledge and wisdom, and of lofty eloquence fell from his lips. In truth, Mr. GLADSTONE need not fear comparison with the greatest of British orators in extent of information, amplitude of comprehension, and thrilling and majestic eloquence. But it is not the grandeur of feeling he breathes into his periods, nor the breadth of view he casts over the subject matter of debate, nor yet his mind filled with the lore of every age, every tongue, and every nation ;—it is not any of these gifts,—grand and commanding though each of them may be,—that most wins public admiration. It is the sincerity and earnestness with which he devotes attention,—these are the qualities that merit universal praise, and add new lustre to every talent he possesses.

Mr. GLADSTONE will open the battle of the century by proposing the following Resolutions :—“ 1. That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary that the Established Church of Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment, due regard being had to all personal interests and to all individual rights of property.” “ 2. That, subject to the foregoing considerations, it is expedient to prevent the origination of new personal interests by the exercise of any public patronage, and to confine the operations of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Ireland to objects of immediate necessity, or involving individual rights, pending the final decision of Parliament.” “ 3. That an humble address be presented to her Majesty, humbly to pray, that, with a view to the purposes aforesaid, her Majesty will be graciously pleased to place at the disposal of Parliament, her interest in the temporalities of the archbishoprics, bishoprics, and other ecclesiastical dignities and benefices in Ireland, and in the custody thereof ;”—and it is very generally expected that he will obtain a great majority which will advance and hasten the settlement of this great question, and place Mr. DISRAELI'S Administration in a very awkward position. Mr. DISRAELI has proposed that, if possible, the division shall take place on Friday evening, and that the House shall immediately adjourn for the holidays, because, as he says, after a struggle of that kind, there would be no use entering the next week for business.

For some days rumors have been afloat respecting a number of amendments to Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions on the Irish Church ; and already the terms of three of them are known—those of Mr. LAING, Mr. WATKIN, and Lord STANLEY. Mr. LAING proposes no change in the text of the three Resolutions ; but, should they be carried, he will move the addition of a fourth, to the effect, that, “ while the principle of disestablishing the Irish Church has been affirmed by the House, the question is too important to be settled without an appeal to the constituencies originated by the new Reform Act ; and, therefore, that it will be the duty of the Government to arrange the course of public business so as to enable this appeal to be made at the earliest practicable opportunity.” Such a plan must tend to complicate rather than to simplify the position. Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions declare, that the Irish Establishment should cease to exist as a State Church ; that, pending the final decision of Parliament, it is expedient to make no more appointments ; and that the Crown should be asked to place at the disposal of Parliament its interest in the temporalities of the Irish



Church. Now it is clear that, if affirmed, these propositions must be immediately embodied in a Bill. Were they to be enforced by the Government without the authority of an Act, the House would practically be legislating on its own responsibility. Until the election of the new Parliament—that is, for eight or ten months—no vacancies in the Irish Church would be filled up. Hence, for that period, the House would carry into effect an important Legislative measure by a mere Resolution. That is, it would be usurping authority to which it had no legal right; and, so far as one question of momentous importance was concerned, the House of the Lords would for the time cease to be a branch of the Legislature. Of course, the author of the “measure” contemplated no such irregular process; and, as I have already stated, the carrying of the Resolutions must have been forthwith followed up by a Bill. That Bill would come before the House of the Common men in the usual way, would go through the customary stages, would then be sent to the House of the Lords, would receive the assent of the Crown, and would thus disestablish the Church without the slightest usurpation of authority. Mr. LAING, however, seeks to prevent the House from taking any such course. He would distinctly bind the present Parliament not to legislate on the subject. Thus, I repeat, if his motion were carried and enforced, the Lower House would, until the next election, actually do what Mr. LAING says it ought not to do; and, during the interval, the Crown and the Commons would, on one subject, practically be legislating without the consent of the Peers. A worse proposition, therefore, than that put forward by the right hon. gentleman, without any consultation with his party, could hardly be conceived; for, if united to the Resolutions of Mr. GLADSTONE, it would make the whole series so unparliamentary that they would be sanctioned neither by Liberals nor by Tories. Mr. WATKIN, who has also taken independent action, proposes to move as an amendment to Mr. GLADSTONE’s first Resolution, that, while the House thinks the future position of the Irish Establishment is a question to be finally decided by the next Parliament, it affirms that, as a State Church, that Establishment must cease to exist. These words do not render the intentions of the honorable gentleman sufficiently clear. Does he intend to affirm the second and the third Resolutions, which would stop appointments, and would hand over to Parliament the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown; or does he exclude those propositions? If he accepts them, his course is open to precisely the same objection as that which must be brought against Mr. LAING’s. He would involve the House in a policy of usurpation, and cut away the only ground on which the motions of the Liberal party can be defended. If, on the other hand, he intends his amendment to supersede the second and third propositions, it is useless. The first does not call for any immediate action; it simply expresses the opinion of the House; and, were it alone carried, there would be no need to embody it in a Bill until the election of the new Parliament. The clearest and the most straightforward course is that which has been taken by Lord STANLEY, who has raised a distinct issue that no one can misunderstand. As the Foreign Secretary has announced, he will meet the motion for going into committee on Monday next with the amendment that the House, “while admitting that considerable modifications in the temporalities of the United Church in Ireland may, after a pending inquiry, appear to be expedient, is of opinion that any general proposition tending to



the disendowment or disestablishment of that Church ought to be reserved for the decision of a new Parliament." This amendment meets the Resolutions with a direct bar to their passing, and will prevent honorable gentlemen from raising any side issue. But, although it goes strongly and frankly in the face of the Liberal party, it is so far a gain that it acknowledges the urgency of the question mooted by Mr. GLADSTONE, and virtually endorses the undertaking to follow up the debate with action. Nay more, while it pledges the Government to deal with the question on the assembling of the new Parliament, it also leaves Mr. GLADSTONE still more emphatically pledged. Even should the amendment be carried, and his Resolutions be set aside by the present House, they would still stand on the records of Parliament as the irrevocable announcement of the policy which he must initiate at the very earliest assemblage of the newly-constituted Parliament. Thus, either now or a few months hence, the battle must be fought on the broad issue which has been raised. Meanwhile, the duty of Liberal members is to support Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions against Lord STANLEY's amendment; for, in the eyes of the Nation at the next election their conduct in choosing between the two counter propositions, immediate "disestablishment" or general "modification," will form the test of their genuine Liberalism.

I clearly observe that the gist of Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions resides in the plain words, "It is necessary that the Established Church of Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment." The other portions of his Resolutions are simple corollaries to this fundamental proposition. The circumstances under which the House of the Common men is called upon to vote in favor of this declaration are most peculiar. The M.P.'s are the same who would have ranged themselves in a majority against it a few months since, or at any previous period of their term of office; but now they are expected to abandon the evasion and procrastination to which they have been so long addicted, and to give their decision in favor of an organic change of the highest moment, and involving a long array of Liberal consequences which many of them foresee, and which most of them dislike. They know that the ultimate settlement of this question must take the form of Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions, as the attacking forces are obviously the most powerful. For the maintenance of the most anomalous and offensive institution of modern times, there are the aristocratic families who refuse to adapt their conduct to the advance of Liberal ideas, the Orange party in Ireland, and the fanatical churchmen in England. Against the institution are the great majority of the British nation and seven-eighths of the Irish people; and the new Reform Bill, with all its shortcomings and defects, is sure to make the popular voice heard distinctly in the next Parliament, declaring that Ireland shall no longer be goaded into rebellion by class domination and ecclesiastical robbery. "The Church Establishment," as I have stated in my last letter to Mr. DISRAELI, "is doomed. Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions are adapted for its destruction. The House of the Common men cannot refuse to treat his proposition with the consideration which its vast importance deserves; and the House of the Common men cannot refrain from going further, and condemning and removing the greatest scandal of the age. One simply wonders now, how so great a reform has been so long delayed, and how it is that a great grievance denounced years ago has been tolerated to a period which



ought to have been the witness of its extirpation. In no spirit of faction do I hail the triumph that is inevitable. Few know, and few care to know, the evil interests that are bound up with the institution whose existence is now a matter of months. Were it merely an agency of religious teaching, propagating a creed which, although hostile to the sentiments of the people, had yet something to recommend it to their intelligence, it might be borne with as one of those social afflictions from which there is no escape. It is, however, devoid of a single redeeming feature, and charity itself cannot offer it the shadow of protection. It is happily doomed, and blessings innumerable will flow from its destruction. With the Church Establishment will go down the greatest evils that ever afflicted Ireland. Ascendency, intolerance, the spirit of bigotry, which is the spirit of persecution, will disappear, and in its stead there will shine forth in all its purity and brightness, the spirit of that pure fraternity which means peace and good-will to all mankind. With the Established Church in Ireland have been bound the greatest scandal and the greatest grievance of misgovernment. It has been the fruitful mother of intolerance,—the rich source of difference and dispute. The symbol of conquest, it became the badge of political degradation, and to the last it has continued to be the exponent of a policy which was as ruthless in its tendency as it was unjustifiable in its principle. It is impossible that there could be peace in Ireland so long as the Church Establishment continues. Pride, arrogance, and bigotry are the products of its existence. It has no hold upon the affections and sympathies of the people. It was imposed upon them against their will; it has been their great persecutor in darker days; it is still their great oppressor, and it must be got rid of, no matter what may be the cost or sacrifice. When it has disappeared the only wonder will be how well it can be dispensed with. For over its ruins will spring into life the blessed seeds of harmony and peace. In Ireland, then, there will be no vain pretensions to superiority,—no offensive assumptions of exclusive privileges based upon State orthodoxy. Each sect and party will stand on its own merits, and on the disappearance of a false and unjust precedence there will come a righteous and satisfactory equality, which will prove a blessing to the land, distracted by many troubles, the greatest of which are and have been the religious bickerings for which the State Church is solely responsible. I earnestly hope the existence of that Church is drawing to a close, and I cannot exaggerate the satisfaction with which I view the manly step that Mr. GLADSTONE has taken for its final extinction." Whatever may be the consequences to Mr. DISRAELI's Cabinet, the Liberal party ought to be unanimous and united upon the occasion. It is probable that, in case of defeat, Mr. DISRAELI will endeavor, if possible, to cheer his followers by inviting them to join in an appeal to the Nation. The Tories would naturally like to exert their influence as a government upon the next elections,—the first under their own Reform Bill,—if such it can be called. If beaten before Easter upon a Resolution involving no immediate action, they may proceed after Easter to finish the Irish and Scotch Reform Bills, and do such other business as may be absolutely necessary before the long vacation arrives, and the present House of the Commons scatters to meet no more. Upon religious questions the population of the British Empire are making great progress. There is a marked diminution of cantankerous bigotry, and a great increase in the dispo-



sition to act up to the Christian maxim of doing to others as we would have them do to us. The public have learnt to regard the Irish question from a truly Liberal point of view. Mere expediency is not now listened to out of the narrow circles in which it naturally lingers. Is it right, or is it wrong? Is it just or unjust?—this is the popular question about the Irish Establishment, and no quibbles can turn a nation on one side when it sees its duty, and has made up its mind that it shall be done. The Irish Protestant Church will cease to be an Establishment—not as a concession to seditious clamor, nor as a triumph for Roman Catholicism, but simply and entirely because the meanness and vice of aristocratic government is passing away, and the British Nation advancing in intelligence, liberty, and power, decrees by acclamation the abolition of the wrong. The present Parliament may lay down the principle,—the next Parliament must do the work; but it will not be without a serious struggle that the obstructive classes will give way. Mr. DISRAELI has placed himself in a false position. His last speech pledges him to what he knows is the losing side, as well as the wrong side, of a great Constitutional fight. The Irish Church is, in fact, the rock upon which his party will split. The more intelligent will see that it is of no use “kicking against the pricks,” and the less intelligent will remain all their lives, dull, dead weights, resisting progress to the utmost of their power. A Tory government after the next elections will be impossible, and if men who have called themselves Tories or Conservatives hold office, it must be on the condition that they act upon Liberal plans. The people have determined that no faction shall rule Ireland upon the method of coercion, and the leading Liberals, now headed by Mr. GLADSTONE and yourself, declare that the ecclesiastical obstacle to good government and contentment shall absolutely cease. Logically speaking, Mr. GLADSTONE’S Resolutions ought to have been carried long ago. They belong to that change which was introduced when the measure known as Catholic Emancipation became law. The hostile Establishment of a Protestant Church in the midst, and at the expense, of a Roman Catholic Nation, was an act of conquest and violence. It was in harmony with a system of confiscation of estates and penal laws intended to extirpate the Roman Catholic Religion. From the moment that the Liberals prevailed, and determined that Ireland should be governed upon Constitutional principles, the Protestant Establishment was a logical absurdity as well as a Legislative monstrosity, and it was maintained upon flimsy pretexts by aristocratic factions. During the present Session,—Will it be enough if the House of the Common men affirms the principles of Mr. GLADSTONE’S Resolutions?—and leave the next Parliament and Session to transfer the struggle to the unreformed and most irrational part of the British Constitution,—the hereditary House of the Lords, which the Tories are making worse by fresh manufacture of obstructive Peers? Aristocracy and Democracy confront each other upon the Irish question in all its branches. Aristocracy is for the Protestant Church Establishment, Democracy condemns it. Aristocracy is against Tenant-right, Democracy demands it. Aristocracy has one branch of legislation all to itself, and, in spite of the new Reform Bill, will exercise great power over the so-called popular branch. Democracy claims that whatever distinctions it may be desirable to preserve between an Upper and a Lower Chamber, both should be national and representative. The Irish Church question is



calculated to bring into striking contrast the merits of a reformed House of the Common men, and the demerits of an unreformed House of the Lords. The Tories are right in supposing that when the Irish Church is swept away, other changes will follow. Popular opinion will certainly not stand still, and a whole group of Liberal measures will be demanded of the new House of the Common men, to which the Lords will find themselves obliged to submit. We are at that stage of a perfectly safe and peaceful revolution, in which concession is inevitable and resistance not only foolish, but dangerous. After a time will come the natural demand for repose, but the Nation now feels the consciousness of new-born strength and power. After years of waiting it perceives that important and beneficial changes are within its reach, and for some time to come every victory will stimulate it to fresh exertion; and efforts to thwart it will only serve to bring fresh energies into play. The Nation is, in fact, renewing its youth, and a wholesome consciousness of growth pervades the best portions of society. There is nothing that may not be attained by a people proud of their past history, exulting in present capacities, and determined to place themselves at the head of civilization. It will be a noble thing if the first act of the people, on their accession to fresh power, should be to redress the wrongs of centuries, "pluck from the memory of Ireland a rooted arrow," as Mr. GLADSTONE invites them to do, heal the wounds which aristocratic factions have made, and lay broad and deep the foundations of future prosperity and good-will. Let the eye of each constituency be on its representatives, with a determination that at the next election they shall be rejected who falter or fail.

On one point there seems to be unanimity and determination, and that is, the destruction of the Irish State Church. It may now be taken for granted that the Establishment in Ireland is doomed. No party can sustain the edifice which is toppling to its fall. Its last prop has been removed, and even Mr. DISRAELI, fertile in resources, can only appeal for a temporary respite of the sentence which has gone forth with the certainty of fate itself. I could wish that on other points of greater practical importance there was equal accord and determination; but time must be relied on to bring about the changes which wisdom seems inadequate to suggest. We have no immediate prospect of a settlement of the land question. Neither Whig nor Tory appears competent to deal with it. The interests of the aristocracy, or what are assumed to be their interests, bar the way to legislation; it is impossible, all at once, to beat down the prejudices which are fortified by time, and which have their root in feelings the most difficult to influence, much less to overcome. It is only filling the public mind with false hopes to hold out any prospect of an adequate settlement of the Land question. That question involves what is practically and in principle a great revolution, and the revolution can only be accomplished by a change of thought, or circumstances of which I see no immediate prospect. The point which Parliament is likely to concede, and which no change of party fortune can materially affect, relates to the Established Church. No hand, however powerful, can stay the doom of the Establishment; and this is the sum and substance of the reform which the Irish people may confidently expect. The one special measure which specially relates to Ireland, is the inevitable one which affects the Church Establishment. What precise form it may take, what will be its real scope and final purport it is impossible to



say, but the fiat of Justice has gone forth, and the last remnant of ascendancy is devoted to destruction. Although I have ceased to regard the coming event as a remarkable change, I can hardly realize its full effects. With the Establishment there will go down one great curse of Irish Society. The bigotry which has been the shame of Europe, which has armed brother against brother, and torn the land with divisions and strife; which crushed the spirit of patriotism, and made Country the smallest consideration in the citizen's mind,—that bigotry has been nursed by the *alien* Church which could only exist on its support. The ascendancy which poisoned all the relations of life, which turned a false supremacy into a dangerous tyranny, and which kept alive the artifices by which despotism sustains its power, is at last doomed; and it is not too much to say that over its ruins there will spring into life and bloom, the fair flowers of that fraternity whose gospel is good-will and whose mission is freedom.

Sincerely wishing you a continuation of strength and success in your noble endeavors to secure Justice for your fellow-men,—I am, dear Sir, yours most cordially in the progressing cause of humanity and justice,

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER X.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
April 1st, 1868.

The Right Hon. B. DISRAELI, Prime  
Minister of Britain.

DEAR SIR,—MR. GLADSTONE justified his Resolutions on last Monday, in a strong and masterly exposition, which was in no sense answered by LORD STANLEY'S half-hearted and reluctantly-uttered speech. MR. GLADSTONE rose, in the midst of a volley of cheers from the Opposition, which condensed at last into a sound so vehement as to establish at least a Liberal unity of purpose in sound. He began very calmly, and throughout never abandoned himself to the impetuous rush of words and ideas of which he is so great a master. He went as carefully into details as if he were opening an Ecclesiastical Budget, every item of which he desired to recommend to the consideration of his opponents. For a little while he indulged in an autobiographical vein, and vindicated his consistency in now making a motion which had been maturing in his mind for more than twenty years, and he called for a proof that he had ever defended the English Church in Ireland,—in principle,—and he referred to the fact that he had paid the penalty of his opinion even immaturely stated in 1865, by the loss of his seat for Oxford University. “The time has come for the Establishment in Ireland to cease to exist as an Establishment”—that is the principle of the Liberal party. The methods of disestablishment and disendowment, and yet more, the disposition of the surplus funds surviving those processes, are points for future treatment. Yet, that no charge of vague intentions should be made against him, the Liberal Leader outlined the principles to be followed in putting an end to this historical monstrosity. He would respect to the utmost “vested interests,” would allow congregations to retain churches if they chose to pay for them, leave the parishes their glebe and parsonage, compensate the owners of advowsons, and even entertain the claims of the cadets of



the Irish Establishment for their damaged prospects. Here is certainly no want of tenderness to the delicate feelings of those whose religious fervor centers in the region of their pockets ; and Mr. GLADSTONE's plan of disestablishment would, in fact, leave from two-thirds to three-fifths of the existing revenues in the hands of the " Anglican Communion in Ireland," as he christens the Establishment. This liberal provision it would enjoy without envy ; and, as facts show that it has utterly failed to make converts, while its existence has been an insult and an eyesore, it could not fare worse, but would probably fare much better, with a conscience and a treasury relieved. In point of fact, as Mr. GLADSTONE said, the Irish Church has not been a religious so much as a political institution ; and, according to its most sanguine advocates, it would succeed, at its present rate, in Protestantizing the Irish people in about two thousand years. The time has come when, without deceit or delay, the hybrid between Orange politics and territorial piety should be condemned to death as a State institution. The mover of the Resolutions pointed out that, the first being abstract, and therefore in itself unpractical, it needed the positive definitions of the second and third to assure Ireland of the good faith of Parliament, and above all, to give instant effect to the determination of Parliament by arresting the growth of this baneful incubus. Mr. GLADSTONE gave two specimens of this growth. Last year the benefice of Newton, Lismore, was originated " for ever and ever," with a " congregation" of four Anglicans, and an endowment of £330 ; and this year Kilmoyle, in Tuam, was originated an incumbency with four Anglicans to 2,779 Catholics, also " for ever." If the British people are not ready to stop such parodies of pious zeal as this,—For what are Reformers ready? Lord STANLEY's " modifications," as Mr. GLADSTONE remarked, will not satisfy the Irish ; while even the Tory amendment admits the necessity of action of some kind. An abstract Resolution to " act" must be " signed and sealed" by definite propositions to stay the growth of the huge and ancient grievance. Such are the second and third proposals of the Liberal Leader ; and, whether they find their embodiment in a provisional Bill, with your name or Mr. GLADSTONE's name upon its back, the mover of the Resolutions insisted, that the House must choose between accepting them, or making the spirit of Ireland sick to the core with hope deferred. The curious politicians who demand extracts from the History of England commit a sad error : they " protest too much." The logical force of the quotations for which they call, from the Act of Union and King WILLIAM's Coronation Oath, if those passages had any force, would be to make any change whatever impossible. Lord STANLEY's promised modifications would be just as wicked as Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions ; and the hapless conclusion would ensue, that what Parliament had once done Parliament could never undo. That may have been the principle of the Medes and Persians, and those Orientals may have found it suitable to human affairs of their particular period ; but in our day the theory is ridiculous. Lord STANLEY hardly succeeded better with his replication than these students of history with their researches. He was cold and ineffective to a degree unprecedented even for a speaker who never does invoke any other instruments of debate than common facts. He spoke like a statesman who was doing a duty to his party rather than expressing his own sentiments, and indeed, in more than one sentence the mover of the amendment let it be seen that he was no admirer of the Irish Church either as a political



or a religious institution. He objected to the Resolutions that they were vague and unpractical; said that Mr. GLADSTONE's "plan" was "no plan at all"; and maintained that, if the proposed change conciliated and encouraged Ireland generally, it would affront Ulster, with its million and a quarter of Protestants. Lord STANLEY did not seem to feel how poorly such an argument promises for justice, when it may suit your convenience to "discuss the destruction of the Church." His lordship's speech ended abruptly in the curt statement that your Government did not recognize the necessity, the expediency, or the propriety of any immediate and definite utterance upon the subject. He therefore invited the House to reject the Resolutions and accept the amendment. The tone of this able Minister was throughout so spiritless, and his argument so slight, that, as he sat down, a cold shade fell visibly upon the Tory benches. One ardent and imaginative opponent of the Resolutions, to whom a London paper gives voice, has found an argument against them in the assertion that Mr. GLADSTONE is "a Catholic in disguise." I trust that this perturbed mind may obtain re-assurance from Mr. MONCRIEFF's speech, which represents "No Popery" opinions as strongly as anything could, and earnestly supports the very "Papistical" Leader of the Liberal party. Such lunacy as the imputation that the chief of the Liberal party is a Romanist, may serve to show what frantic passion will suggest against Truth and equity; and Mr. GLADSTONE, alternately accused of neology and Romanism, is in the meantime merely guilty of wishing his own Church quit of a disgrace that belies the very charter of Protestantism. Lord CRANBORNE's ridicule of the tactics of his party completed the discomfiture of last Monday night. He pointed out that "modification" meant nothing, while by its amendment the Government was really accepting disendowment. He read that wonderful letter in which you have given the world to know how you tremble for the safety of the Reformed Church, if an act of justice should be done in Ireland. Lord CRANBORNE would have preferred to meet Mr. GLADSTONE with a direct negative; and that course, though impossible to permit, and absolutely defiant of Irish opinion and the opinion of the world, would at least have been intelligible and honest. In spite of Lord CRANBORNE's vigorous and animated speech, the debate flagged. Meanwhile, the fact that Mr. WATKIN has been forced by his constituents to place his amendment at the disposal of Mr. GLADSTONE so far clears the ground. The opening of the campaign has, on the whole, confirmed the judgment of Mr. GLADSTONE and shown the weakness of his opponents. The principle advanced by the Opposition will be affirmed, and your Government will be forced to accept the opinion of the present House, that there must be no more trifling with the grievances of Ireland. And from that vote, however much may be of necessity and propriety left to detailed Acts and future Sessions, will at once commence a new era of content for Ireland, and a future without shame and hatred for "the Anglican Communion" throughout the entire British Empire.

What the Tory party really means by "considerable modifications" was exposed last night,—as well as any Tory now living can expose it,—by Mr. GATHORNE HARDY. The salvos of cheering which greeted the right honorable gentleman were such as showed how the minds of the squires and county members were comforted when their own "true blue" opinions about "justice to Ireland" were expressed as no other



Minister could express them. Mr. HARDY's work is to give utterance, on any and all occasions, to the old-fashioned Tory ideas, and, in its way, his manner of doing so is perfect. After Lord STANLEY's address on Monday night, the Tory party evidently found unspeakable relief in the Home Secretary's vigorous and reckless defiance. The Foreign Secretary talks logic, and Tories feel as awkward while his lordship is their spokesman as travelers do when a dragoman is interpreting for them in an Oriental tongue. Mr. GATHORNE HARDY they can follow and understand; and there is no doubt that he gives the right definition of the "modifications" which are now to be expected from your Government. Ireland will get just as much justice as your Cabinet is forced to give her. Mr. HARDY confessed, amid the plaudits of his own side, that he would have preferred to move the "direct negative" to the Resolutions. He wants time to study details; he wants facts; he wants opportunities; he wants schemes about the surplus fund; he wants everything requisite for action. He will do anything except violate the sacred principle that Kilmoyle ought to have a Protestant State parson, and that the Roman Catholic tithe-payers ought to supply the Protestant parishioners with the "means of grace." He would do anything to save himself from the awful task of meddling with "the Lord's anointed" in the form of an Irish bishop. He fetched the spirit of Sir JAMES GRAHAM from Elysium to tell us, in language which may be proper in the other world, that the "Irish Church is as eternal as the ALMIGHTY." He tried to frighten the London guilds and companies into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the hallowed object of assault; and he even made himself the apologist of the Peers, demanding that they should bear a hand in the Resolutions and "modifications." In his sincere Tory despair at the prospect of religious equality in Ireland, he made the perilous request that, if it be established at all, it should be established universally. He got so far off the track of logic as to protest that it was really a capital thing for liberty in Ireland to suspend the *habeas corpus*; and all this slashing rhetoric of re-action was intermingled with personal onslaughts of the rashest kind. Lord CRANBORNE was the first object, on account of the damaging comments which his lordship had delivered on Mr. HARDY's consistency and on your piety. Then Mr. GLADSTONE was arraigned on the strength of some letters written by a nameless correspondent to an obscure journal. The gist of the harangue lay in the statement, with which the right honorable rhetorician perorated, that if the Amendment were defeated his side would fight the Resolutions, and that if these were carried he at least would never take part in the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church. Of course Mr. GATHORNE HARDY speaks only for so much of the Government as sits in his seat. Neither yourself nor Lord STANLEY contributed much to the cheers which greeted the excited and "truly illiberal" oration, which nevertheless warmed the Tories immensely. Mr. GOSCHEN replaced the question in the regions of argument and Political Science. Sir JAMES GRAHAM was doubtless an admirable and pious person, and the "means of grace" are desirable at Kilmoyle; but religion must not be invoked to cover tyranny, or palliate national spoliation. The question whether or not disestablishment will conciliate Ireland, and help to suppress Fenianism, is subordinate to the question whether disestablishment is just. If it be just, it ought to be effected, even though it increased Fenianism, and drove Ireland wild with a passionate desire for more



and more Kilmoyles. Mr. GOSCHEN did a service by enunciating this plain moral truth of Politics to the astonished Tories ; but he was indeed very badly chosen to answer Mr. HARDY. A speech as able and as full of pluck and fire as Mr. HARDY's has an effect, whether it be rational or not ; and with such an audience as heard it last night, a speaker like Mr. LOWE or Mr. BRIGHT would best have neutralized its influence, and ought to have followed. Debates have vastly improved in character, and are keenly read by the public ; so that Reformers must urge upon those who organize their course not to put up any but stalwart and telling fighters at the critical points of the encounter. On such a great question as this, the Nation wants to hear men like Mr. FORSTER, Mr. CHILDERS, Mr. STANSFELD, and their like, as well as the gentlemen of the old Cabinet or Whig school. The force of oratory in the House must no longer be undervalued ; its standard was never higher in our history than it is now, when the House contains such masters of the English language as Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. BRIGHT, and Mr. LOWE. It is a power in the House and an immense power in the Nation, where the reports of it are read by millions of readers, and a declaimer like the present Home Minister should be met on the Liberal side by men who can speak as forcibly as himself, and who can argue better. After the "small-talk" of the languid dinner-hours, during which one rash Tory orator invoked "another place" to help him towards a "protracted struggle," mention must be made of the admirable maiden speech of Captain WHITE, which was distinguished by good sense, modesty, and cultivated facility. Although an Irish Protestant, he declared he would sooner see the Church run any risk than base a fictitious prosperity upon oppression and injustice. Following this excellent piece of promise the Tory Irish Attorney-General led off a resonant oration with a false quantity, quoting erroneously the old line, thus : "*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*" His blunder, and the fact of his addressing the House of the Common men as "gentlemen," ensured him at least the tribute of laughter. The official speaker seemed to think that it might console Ireland if the revenues of the Establishment were re-divided among its clergy,—which is as if brigands should seek to soothe the feelings of the plundered by consulting them as to the proper distribution of the spoil. The Irish people don't object to the salaries of the bishops ; they only object to the bishops themselves. Mr. BRIGHT's speech succeeded, and effaced the hapless advocate of the Amendment ; predicting that legal cobwebs would very soon be swept away and justice be done to Ireland. He pointed out that the speech of Mr. HARDY had contravened that of Lord STANLEY, and he expected that another of the Ministers would, by-and-bye, answer Mr. HARDY : the result of "a Government which is not a Government." That is what the British people get by the Ministry of a Minority, and by a Tory Cabinet with a "truly liberal" policy. What you will do when you are rudely defeated on your first exposition of that policy remains to be seen. The defeat is as certain as the end of the debate.

Memorable in many ways, Mr. BRIGHT's speech last night was pre-eminently memorable for its noble attempt to break down the party character of the debate on the Irish Church. That the discussion should have such a character was inevitable. So long as the day for practical and immediate action seemed far off, politicians were ready enough to promise that their votes would not be biased by the wish



to keep you in or to keep out Mr. GLADSTONE. But the day of reckoning has come suddenly. All at once, men on both sides of the House are alive to the immensity of the subject. Liberals see the iniquity of the institution with new vividness. Tories are struck by the vastness of the interests at stake, and the difficulties of severing the links that centuries have rivetted between Church and State. While the one party, therefore, call for instant action, the other clamor for open defiance or for delay. At such a time it is supremely important to strike the key-note of conciliation ; and that is what was done by Mr. BRIGHT. He began by burning HANSARD. Instead of wasting time and exciting angry passions, by raking up the words in which leading Statesmen had characterized the Irish Church ten or twenty years ago, he distinctly stated that in such a case inconsistency might be a virtue. It is no discredit to a public man that, thirty years ago, he thought the State bound to maintain the Irish Church Establishment ; but he would have a slender title to the character of a Statesman, if, after the lessons of thirty years, he still held to his early faith, and still answered the entreaties of Ireland for relief with a stubborn determination to stand still. Mr. BRIGHT recognized the fact that the gradual development of Mr. GLADSTONE'S opinions on such questions was only a proof of his educating himself. I do not doubt that the same power belongs to men on the Tory side. Well, the Nation will welcome their conversion. They will be greeted with no cries of apostacy, and Mr. BRIGHT'S speech expresses the spirit in which they will be received by the Liberal party. In tone, Mr. HARDY'S address was a striking contrast to Mr. BRIGHT'S. Its ability was, of course, undeniable. Indeed, Mr. HARDY had scarcely received credit for such a power of declamation as that which he displayed last night. But the very ability of his harangue only lays it the more open to criticism, since that ability was used to excite party passion to fever-heat. Mr. HARDY appealed to party prejudice, and to nothing else. The feelings which have inflamed the Orangemen into hatred against their fellow-countrymen were the only feelings which he strove to excite. Stubborn Toryism was invited to hoist the flag of "No surrender," and a hint was given to the Protestants of Ireland that they could not be blamed for pointing their protests with threats. Such an appeal to the lowest of party passions had not been heard for years, and the more bigoted Tories naturally greeted it with rapture. They had begun to doubt whether any of their leaders were true to the old creed, as they well might when, time after time, both yourself and Lord STANLEY spoke in the tones of men who felt that the day of surrender was near, and who were chiefly anxious to secure easy terms from the victors. But Mr. HARDY defiantly professed the old Sibthorpean creed, and his party cheered him, not so much for what he said as for the boldness with which he spoke. Nor, indeed, did his speech contain one sentence which could have convinced any person who had not been convinced before. Never has a declaimer made such an impression on the House by so small an expenditure of argumentative power. If any of the gentlemen who cheered Mr. HARDY will take the trouble to shovel away the Minister's rhetoric, and to range his doctrines in the form of naked propositions, they will be ashamed to say that any one of the series is sound or even plausible. Mr. HARDY said that he would not abandon the "principle" of the connection between Church and State. I beg the right honorable gentleman's pardon for flatly contradicting him ; but the truth



is that he recognizes no such "principle." In the colonies of Britain there is no connection between Church and State; in those dependencies Britain has never enforced that "principle;" even Mr. HARDY himself would resist any attempt to enforce it in Canada; and how that "principle" can be sacred in Ireland, when it is worthless in Canada, is one of those questions which the right honorable gentleman wisely refrained from discussing. What he means is, that he refuses to sacrifice, not a "principle," but a mere conventional arrangement. He told the British people next that, if they cut the link between Church and State in Ireland, they should have to do the same thing in England. Before the Reform Bill of '32, a borough-monger might as justly have argued that, if Parliament disfranchised Old Sarum, it must disfranchise Yorkshire. Nay, more, the GATHORNE HARDYS of that day did advance that monstrous proposition. They declared that the destruction of the rotten boroughs meant the destruction of the "principle" on which the largest and most immaculate of boroughs could claim representation. But in each case the answer is that no "principle" is at stake; that the Old Sarums were condemned simply as Old Sarums; that the Irish Establishment is to be destroyed simply and solely because it is the Irish Establishment; and that the English Establishment will not be destroyed until, like that of Ireland, it shall have become hateful to the bulk of the English people, until it shall have become the Church of a mere fraction, and until the peace of the Empire shall depend upon its overthrow. If Mr. HARDY anticipates such a result, he is the most dangerous among all the Church's enemies. Again, the right honorable gentleman maintained that, if the Irish Establishment were disendowed, neither private nor corporate property would possess any security of tenure. He might as well argue that, because the State permits a railway company to make a line through a gentleman's park, when such a course is demanded by the public good, the State will confiscate that gentleman's balance at the banker's. He might as well argue that, because the State applies the funds of a pernicious charity to the education of the poor, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will make up his next deficit by seizing the funds of some useful hospital. In fact, Mr. HARDY's sophisms are so transparent that his speech is the most severe indictment which has yet been leveled at the Established Church. Since so able a man can say nothing in its favor, Reformers may not unreasonably infer that nothing can be said. When the rest of the Tory Ministers address the House, they will do wisely to speak in the same spirit as Mr. BRIGHT. The honorable gentleman has often been accused of inflaming rather than conciliating his opponents. But he is no longer open to that charge. He has at last learned to recognize that conscientious men may sit on both sides of the House, and that a keen sense of public duty may be allied to every variety of error. Hence his recent appeals have been marked by a singular kindliness of tone, and he has lifted the subject of the Irish Church above Parliamentary routine. If there ever was a question which deserved to be thus elevated, it is that of the Irish Church. Statesmen have an opportunity of doing justice to Ireland such as may never occur again. If British Statesmen blot out the last marks of the old oppression by abolishing a hated supremacy, they shall hasten the day when Ireland will be proud to form part of the British Empire. If they refuse redress, they shall, as Mr. BRIGHT declared, encourage



the idea that Ireland has nothing to hope from the British Parliament; that England's day of trial must be Ireland's opportunity; and that her wrongs will be repaired only when England shall be plunged into a great war. The people of Britain can prevent the growth of that deadly feeling by simply determining that the vast mass of the Irish people shall no longer pay for the support of a Church which they hate, and to which a mere fraction of their number adhere. Statesmen can go far to purchase peace by no longer endowing that minority with the character of a dominant class. On the other hand, if we, as a Nation, refuse to do justice, we shall virtually say that we prefer the interests of a few hundred thousand people to those of a whole country. But now that the issue is before the Nation the decision is clear. The British people will answer Mr. BRIGHT's appeal, and at the eleventh hour will repair a wrong which is a scandal to the British name.

The sillier portion of the stupid party seem to fancy that the whole question is settled for ever by an article in the Act of Union and a phrase in the Coronation Oath, and this stuff was read by the Clerk of the House of the Common men before the debate began, at the request of Colonel KNOX and Mr. SURTEES. Neither of these documents, however, have the force which the stupid party ascribe to them. The Act of Union, like any other Act, is subject to the decisions of existing or future Parliaments, and the Coronation Oath does not in any way preclude her Majesty as the *Servant* of the State from assenting to a Bill embodying the principles of Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions. Her Majesty's grandfather, GEORGE III, of obstinate memory, delighted to take refuge behind his Coronation Oath whenever the rights of Roman Catholics were in discussion; but if a thousand Sovereigns had really sworn to maintain a gross injustice, the people forming the Nation would act upon a higher principle of morality, and find some adequate means of sweeping it away. You have placed your Tory friends in an humbled position, and while the more silly of them may say what they think, the more clever have to argue in manifest opposition to their own convictions. They act a part, and they do not act it well. The high-minded men of the party feel the disgrace of being under the leadership of an unscrupulous political adventurer who uses them to serve his own ambition, and, when your personal success requires it, tricks them into concessions they have devoted all their lives to oppose. No doubt it serves the Tories right to be thus fooled and bamboozled by you. They retain your services just as they would purchase any other article in the market which they thought would suit them. Without you, they would have long since perished as a party, though out of their fragments fresh parties would have been made. They took you as a man of talent, with very low views of public honor. You were not of their order, born and bred in their peculiar prejudices, and could not possibly be a real believer in their creed. But you answered their purpose for a time. You could abuse their enemies to their entire satisfaction. So long as your taunts were pointed with sufficient malignity, they cared no more than you did for veracity. Gradually, and with great labor, you built them up into a power, you placed them in office, and, finally, you became Premier, building the tower of your own ambition upon the ruin of their policy and the defeat of their plans. The story is a pretty one, and if the Tories wince under it, other people may laugh. Your party will have to undergo more "education" if they remain under your political manage-



ment. But what will become of them if they shake you off? A policy of pure resistance to the demands of the age will soon meet with deserved defeat. It is only through conceding much that the Tories can hope to exercise any real influence over the future conduct of the Nation. As soon as a few specially required Reforms have been gained, the natural Conservatism of a contented people will assert itself as a great power, but it will not be the particular Conservatism on which Toryism or Whiggery is built. The reign of great artificial families is virtually over. Territorialism and the hereditary principle are passing away, and the Tory of the future will be something different from the stolid dupe of a Hebrew adventurer or the retainer of a lordly house. For some years to come, we may look for more political earnestness than we have seen for a long time. It is because Mr. GLADSTONE has shown this quality so strikingly in a House of the Common men possessing very little of it, that there has been so much caballing against him, and it is because the members of that House perceive the growth of an earnest spirit among the people that they are now more willing than they were last Session to give up their own frivolity and trickery, and to do something to improve their character before the elections come.

The probabilities of the future are now calculated, not so much on the administrative capability of a Statesman as on the inherent endowments and deficiencies of the people over whom he is called to rule. Faith in the omnipotence of ancient institutions seems to be on the wane, and the once confident expectation that a Constitutional Government would suffice to render any people permanently free, has undergone too many disappointments to readily revive in its ancient force. The prophetic spirit of an impending change is sweeping over Britain like the gaunt shadow of some huge thunder-cloud. In an age of political dilapidation, when the great social structures of an outworn past are crumbling into decay, a process like that which attends organic dissolution in the physical sphere begins to manifest itself. The social elements liberated from the individual system with which they were before especially connected, enter into new combinations and become integral parts of other social arrangements with which they have a nearer relationship. Thus at present the more active minds throughout the British Nation are gradually arranging themselves into great parties, bound together by the tie of common principles, similar ends, and interchangeable sympathies. Their views are no longer merely local, and their desires and efforts are humanitarian rather than strictly national. They are Democrats or Conservatives, Republicans or Monarchists, rather than merely English, Scottish, or Irish. The territorial peculiarities and characteristics so all important a few generations since, are being rapidly subordinated to other considerations, which have a reference rather to social conditions and political constitutions. Men are being arranged by the laws of thought, by the common sentiments which they advocate, rather than by the geographical incident of birth in the same locality. This moribund condition of old forms and the re-absorption of their elements into new bodies is everywhere so evident, that even the most obtuse seem to be at least dimly conscious of some momentous and impending change. Willful blindness alone, indeed, can close its eyes to facts so patent, and thus avoid the rather startling conclusion that we are on the verge of a new era,—that the long established is fast decaying, and the new is already pre-



paring for emergence. The wintry wind of those howling tempests of Sectarian war, whose desolating blasts have been sweeping ever and anon over every department of the Nation for generations, is simply clearing the forest of its withered foliage, that the buds and blossoms of another Spring may in due time make their welcome appearance. The tendency of things is not so much to destruction as to substitution. The populations of England, Scotland, and Ireland are casting off their old habits and badges of unity which were local, and adopting others which are so far general as to be independent of place. And of what is this premonitory if not of an approaching unity? We are being trained both to think and act in concert over spaces never before spanned. England, Scotland, and Ireland, already one in so much that appertains to thought and knowledge, in science, art, and, to some extent, in literature, is now rapidly becoming one in feeling, one in political interaction, and will soon have but two parties,—the men of the past and the men of the future, the friends of Toryism and the advocates of progress. In speculating on the probabilities of the future, one very prevalent source of error is our inability to grasp the present in its totality. We circumscribe our field of view, and in the microscopic notice of a part, become incapable of rightly apprehending the whole. In the speciality of our attention to one class of forces, we become oblivious, probably, of others equally important, although not quite so superficially obvious. Thus in the general dissolution and disintegration of old political arrangements, we are so occupied with the phenomena attendant upon dilapidation as to altogether overlook the counterpoising process of re-construction. Thus all the processes and results of segregation being in immediate proximity to us, we are naturally prone to dwell upon them with especial force, and conclude that they constitute the characteristic features of our epoch; while the political cry of Liberty is very naturally associated in our minds with *national independence, equal rights, and the disappearance of those vast Governmental Structures, known as “Religious State Establishments,”* whose rise, growth, and continued existence have ever proved so destructive to other Sects and parties in their neighborhood. History, says the triumphant Liberal, as he glances proudly around him on the present, and prophetically forward into the future, and contrasts them with the past,—history is but an old almanac. Very true, I say, but from these old almanacs, which give the places of the Planets and other heavenly bodies in former periods, the good Astronomer obtains data which may assist him in calculating their movements for the times to come. The past is but a part of which the future will be required to make a whole. We are as yet but in the midway course of destiny, and shall act most unwisely if we neglect the intimations of her plan afforded by the collective experience of mankind.

I am, dear Sir, still your unpaid preceptor in Political Science, and still searching for that knowledge of Truth and Justice that lives on freedom, and for establishing the freedom of investigation that conducts to the knowledge of Truth and Justice, to the progress, peace, and concord of the people forming the Nation,

JOHN SCOTT.



## LETTER XI.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
April 2nd, 1868.

JOHN S. MILL, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—“This is more than we can bear,” was the exclamation of all the really sound Tories, when they woke up yesterday morning, to read in the papers that, over night, the Lords, after a short debate, had abolished their privilege of proxies! What other old and venerable institution is to disappear suddenly, like ALADDIN’S palace, by the aid of African,—or was it Asiatic?—mystery and magic? Is anything quite secure? The other evening “the parochial constitution of the Church of England,”—I do not know what it means, but it is, I believe, something very divine,—was abolished in five minutes, between twelve and one; a time when the great majority of honest people were all in bed, but when one exception alone, Mr. NEWDEGATE, was awake to denounce the crime. Mr. OTWAY in a single evening abolished that “necessary,” if not “harmless,” cat which has done such wonders by pricking on our own flesh and blood to win all our battles, from Blenheim to Waterloo; in a few minutes more, he struck down that graceful old *Supposition*, the “balance of power;” and when Lord ELCHO proposed to restore it to the Mutiny Act, the House laughed! Will Mr. JOHN BRIGHT be pleased to state, for the information of the trembling Tories, what he does consider too sacred for his attacks? Has he not sapped the foundations of almost everything which they hold dear,—the Throne, and the Altar? Might he not, if he were only honest, paint upon a little board over his seat, “Corn Laws, British Constitutions, Church Rates, and Alien Churches carefully removed in Town and Country. Political parties attended.” On Tuesday night he was kind enough to admit, that in the hereditary monarchy there may be a “convenience;” and the Tories are thankful for even that small mercy. For, if they are to lose their loved institutions, they hope to do so not oftener than at the rate of one a night. The poet says, “Never morn to evening wore but some sad heart did break;” and, at the present rate of clearing away, no morning comes that the Tories do not miss something or other swept away in the night. Still they only hope that the pace, already fast, may not be accelerated: these rapid acts of statesmanship make them rather dizzy. When they have dried their eyes as regards the abolished proxies, they may be strong enough to bear some other loss,—some slipping away into the great relentless stream of time, of the old piers and bulwarks to which the ship of State was once firmly attached; I present through you the metaphor to Lord MALMESBURY free of charge. I do not say that “Chaos is come again.” I do not like, indeed, to say anything positive; for somebody might some day make yourself and your present humble correspondent Tory Ministers,—men once more proud *have* fallen as low,—and then we should have to retract everything we had ever said. But if chaos has not arrived, we have come back politically to a condition analogous to that geological period when most things were in a half fluid, half solid state. In this general flux,—when only odd amphibious creatures, pachydermatous and web-footed, feel in their element, and when any islands whereon the feet may rest are “desperate seldom,”—we are hardly surprised at anything



in the way of hazy politics and unsettlement. Tory principles are very fine, no doubt, in a book, if aided by the feeling for the sentimental and the picturesque; but when we see the principles tossed about contradictorily on the Treasury Bench, wriggling from one end to the other, our feelings are changed. As to the practice of proxies in the Lords, of double-refined gentle blood, Lord MALMESBURY first proved that it was very ancient, very reasonable, and very convenient, and then suggested that it should be given up. 'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour,—the moment a Tory member praises anything in theory he is about to surrender it in fact. A sincere Tory must shudder to hear one of his leaders utter a eulogy; and I should not be surprised to hear of petitions to Mr. DISRAELI and his colleagues to say nothing in praise of fox-hunting, British wives, rotation of crops, pale ale, or roast beef, because these are things which the people are not yet prepared to give up, though no one knows what the Tories may come to in the course of their "education." As to the proxies, they are gone; and thus Reformers, who have ever exposed the mischievous effects of the practice, are now quite safe in saying that the habit was not altogether so black as it has been sometimes painted. It was said to be absurd that some Peer down in the country or abroad was thus enabled to vote on questions when he had not heard the debate. CICERO wondered how two augurs could meet without laughing at the farce they kept up, and it is astonishing that any public man of the present day could use the debate-hearing argument without a smile. Are votes in the House of the Common men always decided by debate? Are the legislators who listened to the speeches on Monday and Tuesday night really wiser as to what was said than the readers of the morning papers? Why, everybody knows that there are not ten men in the Commons who do listen to the whole debate; and few will assert that there are five whose votes are affected by the arguments used. The fact is, that most questions now-a-days are prepared out of doors; public meetings and the press educate our legislators, who simply put into shape the public opinion of the day. Any man who, never entering either House, carefully reads the debates, is much more competent to judge both sides of the question than the average member who spends half his time in the tea-room, lobby, or smoking-room, and only rushes in when there is the prospect of a spicy or a splendid speech. Suppose the House of Lords does force the young Duke of BAREACRES or Lord MOUNTCOFFEEHOUSE to sit sulkily on its crimson benches, and to follow his leader into the right lobby,—What will it have gained? It may have kept the poor imbecile organism out of harm's way; it may have deprived him for some hours of the dear society of betting men, stable-boys, and grooms; but consider the cruelty in forcing him to hear for hours political speeches that no explanation could bring down to his capacity. It may gratify some people to see his ancestral name in a division; but, as the poet says, "We ne'er should mix our pleasure or our pride with sorrow of the meanest thing that feels;" and it is hard that young persons of title, who do not care for politics, should be dragged from their youthful, if not innocent, amusements, to swell the present pomp of some party chief. It may be a man's misfortune, not his fault, that he is the "tenth transmitter of a foolish face;" but why should he be forced to put the foolish face "in evidence," as the French say, and to carry it aimlessly about the lobbies of the Upper House? There are, indeed, many causes or grounds for fulfilling even those conditions,



and others still more stern. In the first place, it is just possible that if the delinquents duly took their places, their mere appearance might dissipate the calumnious supposition that the foolish face commands so large a per-centage in the order; for not only are the well-born apt to be somewhat above the average, even in visible presence, but, with a little more study and practice in the work of the State, the face itself might grow somewhat wiser. Above all, the claimants of a hereditary share in legislation have to prove that they at least can estimate the value and meaning of the privilege. If they account it worth their while to retain their hold on the power, the people will want to see that they think it sufficiently worth their while to pay suit and service for the rank in the form of attendance. If they demand the right of pronouncing judgment on public affairs, let them at least be present when public affairs are discussed and transacted. The Nation will not forget the Lords, if the Lords do not forget themselves. While adopting this genuine improvement, the Peers hesitated about another which is demanded exactly in the same spirit of Reform: they declined to compel the attendance of Peers on private committees. Everybody knows that, as regards private business, the House of the Lords is absolutely in the hands of Lord REDESDALE, Lord SHAFTESBURY, and a few others, who do all the work, and have all the responsibility and power. They are honorable and useful men, though, as the old lady said of a high authority, "they have their crotchets;" but it is a mockery to "thank God we have a House of Lords," as some people say, and then to find that we are thankful for a very small matter,—the continued existence of two or three respectable veterans. There are Peers who never attend a single committee, and never do a single act of public work:—Why not fine them, or force them to delegate their duties to their sons, or suspend their privileges as Peers? Mr. GLADSTONE, the other day, suggested, by way of *reductio ad absurdum*, that it would be rather weak if a Tory Minister, opposing a vote for the extinction of the Peers, proposed an amendment not absolutely rejecting the idea, but admitting that "modifications" were required. We move rather fast now-a-days, and Mr. GLADSTONE may live to see proposed the very resolution he suggested as too weak and feeble even for Tory statesmen. The time is come when old institutions must show an adequate cause for their exercise of power; must wield that power for the public good; and must make privilege popular by proving that it has its use. Two or three gentlemen of family and fortune, calling themselves one of the estates of the realm, and passing new laws in a well-bred whisper, is an old farce that has had a long run. But, after a time, the public are sure to demand new actors and a new play.

The Great Debate on the Irish Church commenced on last Monday night. Mr. GLADSTONE submitted Resolutions to the effect that the Protestant Church in Ireland should be disestablished and disendowed; that the voluntary system should be adopted with regard to all religious sects in that part of the United Queendom; and that the property of the Church should be appropriated to exclusively Irish uses. These Resolutions were met by Lord STANLEY, on the part of Government, with an amendment, that although the Church temporalities admitted of considerable modifications, any proposition tending to disestablishment or disendowment should be reserved for the decision of a new Parliament. Mr. GLADSTONE argued that the object of



Mr. PITT in carrying the Union was to destroy ascendancy and secure equality, results which had not been accomplished, and which now ought to be obtained. The Established Church, he contended, had not answered what he alleged was its original object, the Protestantizing of the people. Ireland remains in a state of discontent and disorder, the cause of which he attributed to the existence of an Established Protestant Church among a people the great majority of whom are of another faith. The grievance is indisputable. There can be no doubt that the Irish population regard with great discontent the Establishment which Mr. GLADSTONE proposes to get rid of, and of which Lord STANLEY studiously refrained from offering any defence. The Solicitor-General pointed out "that without an Act following the Resolution proposed by Mr. GLADSTONE, the Resolution itself would be unconstitutional, the Queen being bound by the Coronation Oath to maintain the Church, and make appointments thereto. The Sovereign cannot constitutionally refrain from performing the duty imposed by that oath, in consequence merely of an address from the House of the Common men. The only way her Majesty could act upon such an address was by giving her consent to an Act of Parliament. The Solicitor-General said that, speaking as a lawyer, he did not pretend that the Queen might not agree to a Disestablishing Bill; but he did most distinctly aver that the Queen ought not to be asked to do aught in derogation of the contract with Parliament and her people contained in that oath on a mere address of one House. The only way that she should be required, if at all, to act, should be by asking her Majesty's consent to a Bill." The Ministerial amendment simply went to throw over the consideration of the question to the next Parliament on the ground of the impossibility of any action being taken at present. Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions go no further than pledging the House to a principle, which the new House may adopt or reject as it pleases; but there would be a great moral influence originated by their adoption. They have the merit also of clearness, of which the Ministerial amendment is deficient. No one can understand what the latter really means. Mr. GLADSTONE declares the Protestant Church in Ireland to be an evil which it is necessary for the repose of Ireland should be abolished; but Lord STANLEY, instead of controverting the proposition simply asked that its consideration might be deferred. The Prime Minister had only a few days before declared that he would consent to no surrender; and the difference of opinion in the Cabinet on the subject became still more evident when Mr. HARDY addressed the House, the burthen of whose eloquent speech was the same. Mr. BRIGHT was, as usual, happy in pointing out the discordance of the Ministerial speeches. The question is surrounded by difficulties, no doubt; but Parliament is competent to deal with them all. The same power that made the Act of Union, which has been emphatically alluded to in the debate, can alter it. By the fifth article of that Act it was enacted that the Churches of England and Ireland should be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called "The United Church of England and Ireland;" and that "the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the said United Church shall be and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established for the Church of England; and that the continuance and preservation of the said United Church, as the Established Church of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental part of the Union; and



that in like manner the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland, shall remain and be preserved as the same are now established by law, and by the Act for the union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland." So that those members were strictly correct who said that the disestablishment proposed by Mr. GLADSTONE would be a repeal of one of the chief articles of the Act of Union ; but if it be found expedient and just to repeal that article, Parliament undoubtedly is able to do so. It is believed that satisfaction would be afforded to a great extent by the establishment of religious equality, and that a further demand for the repeal of the legislative union would not be made. At a large and influential meeting of Roman Catholics in Limerick, a few days ago, the Earl of Dunraven, who occupied the chair, spoke with pleasure of the remarkable change which he observed in the progress of public opinion on this great question in England, and not only on this but on all questions relating to Ireland. "There never was a time (he said) since the connexion between the two countries, in which there was such a strong desire on the part of England to come forward and atone for the errors of the past, and to deal with all those evils of which the people of Ireland most justly complained." This acknowledgment seems to imply a just and generous disposition to arrange matters on a firm and satisfactory basis ; and if so desirable a result is to be accomplished by the disendowment of the Church in Ireland, it would not be too dearly purchased. The maintenance of the Protestant Church in this country has probably never been intended as an insult to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, but it is nevertheless regarded in that light ; and the conviction has taken such deep root, that all the denials that can be made and all the professions and friendly offices that can be offered, will not suffice for its eradication. It becomes a question, therefore, whether it is worth while to allow the discontent arising from a sense of offence and humiliation to remain rankling in the brains of Irishmen for the sake of an endowment for the Church of the minority. Mr. DISRAELI is of opinion that disestablishment in Ireland would lead to a similar operation upon the Church in England, and that as "the union between Church and State has hitherto been the chief means of our civilization, and is the only security for our religious liberty," its destruction would be unwise and dangerous. This opinion is apparently based upon the objections of the Nonconformist bodies to a State Church and the known hostility of the Ritualists also, to whom the supremacy of the State is obnoxious, as it interferes with and effectually checks their own ambition. A Nonconformist paper observes that "a hundred years ago all the leading Nonconformists in England agreed with Churchmen on the fundamental principle that the State was bound to establish and maintain the public worship of Almighty God ;" but a different opinion is now extending. It is considered that "a State cannot be Christian," and that to adopt Episcopacy and a Liturgy, and to declare these to be the religion of the State, is unjust and a positive injury to those who do not receive Episcopacy or use a Liturgy. Upon the same authority we are told that "this view of the matter has gradually taken hold of the Dissenting churches," and that "the millions of English, Welsh, and Scottish Dissenters are united in the belief that Church establishments are essentially unjust." If that be the case, there would seem to be some foundation for a belief that the disendowment of the Church in



Ireland would be brought forward afterwards as an argument and precedent for the disendowment of the Church in England. Whether or not the spirit of Protestantism would be injured is another matter. In consideration of a great national question it is as well to take all possibilities into account. "So soon as the disestablishment of the Irish Church has been voted by Parliament," says the Nonconformist paper, "the English bishops and rectors may begin to calculate whether they have five, or ten, or fifteen years to reckon upon; but assuredly, Queen Victoria's successor will never be, what English Kings have been for three hundred years—the 'Head of the Church of England.'"

It is desirable that the Irish people should receive a direct and tangible proof that there is a real desire to treat them with justice. It is believed that the disendowment of the Church would be accepted as such a proof, and that little would remain afterwards to establish harmony, satisfaction, and contentment. It is of no use saying that the Protestant Church has ceased to be burthensome to Roman Catholic tenants, for notwithstanding that pecuniary exactions have ceased, neither tithe nor church-rate being claimed from the tenant, the landlord (generally a Protestant) being the only party chargeable, for the fact remains of an alien establishment and the impression it has made is vivid and acute of indignity and humiliation. There are many who would not object to the redress of this grievance if any guarantee or assurance could be given that satisfaction would be afforded, and the claims end here; but they have an apprehension that the Act of Settlement would be hereafter objected to, and they might be required to defend the Protestant succession to the Crown. We should not, however, be hindered from the performance of an act which, in our conscience, we believe to be right and just, by vague apprehensions of possible danger at some distant period. There will never be wanting Protestant champions and defenders, we trust, and their cause will be all the stronger when it is freed from anything like injustice. It has been urged that the present Parliament is incompetent to deal with the large question raised by Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions; but the present Parliament is not required to deal with it; Mr. GLADSTONE submitted only an abstract proposition, about which anybody is competent to form an opinion, and which the expiring Parliament is free to deal with, as far as time will allow. The present Parliament could not proceed to the work of disestablishment, and the only doubt as to the propriety of Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions being brought forward at the present time, arises from the possibility of a fierce discussion out of doors before the question can really be brought to an issue. All that can be known as the result of the debate as yet is the number of members of the present House of the Common men who are favorable to disendowment, and the number who desire to uphold the Church. It will be for the new and Reformed Parliament to settle the question; and until that Parliament is elected, the two parties represented, the one by Mr. GLADSTONE and the other by Mr. DISRAELI, will exert themselves in support of their respective opinions. The real struggle will be upon the hustings. The conflict as yet is a mere skirmish, preparatory to a coming battle. Mr. SURTEES, on last Monday, moved that the Coronation Oath should be read, and the demand was supported by the cheers of the House. A very strange misconception exists as to the oath, which is taken to mean that the



Church of England must never be altered or interfered with by the Sovereign, and, it is assumed, by Parliament, because the Sovereign has so sworn. It is true that the Queen did promise upon oath, at her Coronation, that she would "govern according to the laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel as taught by the Protestant reformed religion, and maintain all its rights and privileges." The Coronation Oath was originated by an Act of William and Mary, and the time suggests the considerations under which it was passed. James II had, in the exercise of his prerogative, claimed a dispensing power, and it was believed that he proposed to carry his prerogative as far as the enforced restoration of the monastic estates which Henry VIII had bestowed upon his creatures in the work of the spoliation of the Abbeys, and whose descendants still enjoyed the estates in the time of James. Thereupon the Whig aristocracy became great friends of civil and religious liberty, and joined the people in inviting WILLIAM of ORANGE to come over and deliver them from prerogative and the dispensing power. In order to prevent WILLIAM or any other monarch ever threatening such an extreme measure again, the prerogative was limited by the Coronation Oath and reduced to the action of one separate Estate of the Realm, incapable of being so exerted as to absorb the other Three Estates. If it could be conceived that Parliament would have parted with its limitation over the Monarchy, the preceding words of the oath show that there was no such intention. "Will you govern the people of this realm according to the statutes, laws, and customs of the same?" What are statutes but the expression of the will of the Three Estates in co-ordinate action, and what are laws but statutes reduced into practice by the judges? It was in fact only intended to limit the Sovereign by oath from interference under the exercise of prerogative with the Church, as James had intended to do, and the fact is placed beyond doubt, because Parliament has already passed Acts by which the Test and Corporation Acts, the Catholic Disabilities, and many other grievances have been repealed. Nay, more, both in England and Ireland, the Crown and the Parliament have combined to deal with Church Property, for in both countries we have commuted tithes, and organized Ecclesiastical Commissions. If the Coronation Oath is to be taken as a real security for the temporalities—What might happen when there is no oath in existence, say, between the demise of one Monarch and the Coronation of another? So absurd is the argument founded on the oath.

The two nights of the debate on the disestablishment of the Irish Church have certainly not strengthened that institution, so dear to Irish Tory landlords. The discussion has, however, undoubtedly weakened the Ministry. Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions were precise. They laid down a principle of disestablishment: under some reservation they even indicated a policy of disendowment. When the Resolutions were first announced in the House of the Common men, the Prime Minister seemed himself surprised at their boldness, and he showed some sense of the gravity of the "crisis" which he was ready enough to assure us had come. He set himself to appeal to Protestant fanaticism in England. He assured the Churchmen that this crisis was more English than Irish, and that it was the connexion between Church and State which was at stake. Lord STANLEY'S amendment, however, said nothing about the union of Church and State. It was timid, hesitating, reluctant to assert any principle, only useful as committing Mr.



DISRAELI and his colleagues to nothing absolutely, and leaving as an open question the policy of dealing with the Irish Established Church, or of defending it on the principle of No Surrender. The Prime Minister does not seem particularly anxious what course may ultimately be adopted. The amendment showed that he was desirous of gaining time; but for what purpose it was impossible to say. His earnest followers of the type of Colonel STUART KNOX, who, as he says himself, desperately cling, like drowning sailors—such is the triumph of great Tory principles—to this last feeble plank of Lord STANLEY's amendment, would have preferred a more resolute mode of resistance. They waited, however, until Lord STANLEY's speech to see if they could find in it some comfort which the amendment itself did not afford. The Foreign Secretary's reply to Mr. GLADSTONE on Monday was only, however, a dilution of an amendment which seemed already sufficiently diluted. It was the amendment spread over two columns of the *Times*. The Resolutions, said Lord STANLEY, point to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, but they do not tell us what an Established Church is. They do not declare, continued the Foreign Secretary, what is intended to be done with the endowments: while laying down a principle, they avoid the real difficulty. It seemed, then, from the words of the Foreign Secretary, who was put up by Mr. DISRAELI to indicate the Ministerial intentions, that, if only some way could be found of disposing of the endowments in an equitable and satisfactory manner, the objections of the Government to disestablishment would cease at the meeting of the next Parliament. Lord STANLEY's criticism on Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions, however unsatisfactory to the Ulster Tory Members, and the vehement English partisans of Church and State, were no answer to Mr. GLADSTONE's speech. That address went much further than the Resolutions. Disestablishment and disendowment, in Mr. GLADSTONE's mind, come to pretty much the same thing. The work would begin when the address to the Crown was presented to her Majesty, and her reply had been received. The diligence of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in originating new benefices, of the value of some three or four hundred a-year, where there are but four Protestants to some three or four thousand Catholics, would be restrained. They would no longer, with a perverse industry, be able to build and endow new Episcopalian Protestant Churches where there are no Episcopalian Protestant congregations, with the object of proving that the churches and the benefices of the Establishment are increasing, whatever may be the number of the worshipers. Mr. GLADSTONE evinced an anxiety not merely to respect all vested rights which now exist, but even those which may be in expectancy. So far from proposing anything like confiscation his plan is almost too indulgent to all who may believe they have some actual or possible claim on the possessions of the Church. Disestablishment is deprived of its terrors by preserving to the present holders all benefices, all advowsons to the patrons, all the buildings of the Church and the residences of the clergy, and all funds that have been bequeathed by private persons to the Irish Establishment; and by endeavoring to estimate some imaginary claim to compensation for those "who have separated themselves from the great bulk of profitable secular employments, in expectation of the benefices which we have kept in existence by law, under our authority, even though they may not actually have entered upon them." In endeavoring to be generous to the Irish Episcopalian clergy, Mr. GLADSTONE almost ceases to be just to the State,



and to the millions for whose welfare the State Church has been supposed to exist. Some three-fifths or two-thirds of the possessions of the Church will, according to Mr. GLADSTONE's proposals, remain in the hands of the clergy of the Establishment. The other denominations which have received State aid are also to have their existing emoluments respected. They will not, however, receive their money from the Consolidated Fund. It is evident that Mr. GLADSTONE designs the one-third or two-fifths which may remain of the possessions of the present Irish Establishment, after all vested interests have been satisfied, for a settlement of the claims of the other denominations which are in the receipt of State funds. Lord STANLEY was not prepared for the development of Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions. Hence the very unsatisfactory character of his speech in support of the amendment. It was more evident after Lord STANLEY sat down than it had been before that the Ministers were without a policy. Lord STANLEY virtually said nothing, because, in fact, he had nothing to say. The disappointment throughout the Ministerial ranks was general; and with that disappointment there was not a little dismay. The Irish Tory Members and their friends on the Ministerial benches were suspicious of being "educated" again in their own despite; and they stoutly resolved not to be educated. Lord CRANBORNE exposed, with great force, the want of principle of resistance in Lord STANLEY's amendment and in Lord STANLEY's speech. On Tuesday there was almost open mutiny in the Ministerial ranks; and the Cabinet was clearly divided against itself. The result was that on Tuesday evening Mr. HARDY adopted quite a different tone from that of Lord STANLEY on the preceding evening. The Home Secretary began to defend the Irish Establishment on principle. Mr. BRIGHT had good ground for declaring that the Ministers changed their language every night; and that it was impossible to judge from what one of them said to-day what another would say to-morrow. Two of the most important of Mr. DISRAELI's colleagues have spoken on this great question; but it is still a mystery what line Mr. DISRAELI may take at the close of the debate. He may agree with Lord STANLEY, or with Mr. GATHORNE HARDY. He may dissent from both; and come between his ninepins, rolling down one in one direction another in another. The Ministry can, however, avow no intelligible policy on the Irish Church. The most earnest members of the Cabinet would prefer defending that institution to the last according to their earnest convictions. But Mr. DISRAELI sees plainly, by this time, that even a majority of the present House of the Common men is not prepared to maintain the Irish Establishment on any high Tory principles. The Prime Minister is much less a believer in the State Church than Mr. GLADSTONE himself; but to defend it in Ireland is the bond by which Mr. DISRAELI claims the allegiance of the Tories. The schoolmaster finds himself at the mercy of his pupils. They are inclined, at the least indication of surrendering the Irish Church Establishment, to shut the door against him, and, in a very determined mood, indeed, "to bar him out."

Very little that can bear a moment's examination has been said in favor of the Irish Establishment during the debate as yet. At a loss for any arguments in defence of an institution which has never fulfilled the objects a Church should carry out, the greatest theme for Ministerial rhetoric and sarcasm has been the alleged inconsistency of Mr. GLADSTONE in coming forward personally to advocate the disestablishment of



the Irish Church. For weeks, indeed, this has been the topic of the Tory journals : it was not disclaimed even by Lord STANLEY on Monday evening ; and last night, when Mr. GATHORNE HARDY rose to abandon the hesitating policy of which Lord STANLEY had on the previous evening been the exponent, and which had been the cause of so much dissatisfaction on the Ministerial Benches, the Home Secretary quoted a letter addressed to “ a dignitary and consistent supporter of the right hon. gentleman,” in order to establish Mr. GLADSTONE’s inconsistency. In this letter, Mr. GLADSTONE is stated to have written—“ The question of the Irish Establishment is remote, and apparently out of all bearing upon the practical politics of the day.” The reading, or rather the repeating of this sentence, on Tuesday evening, was received with loud Ministerial cheers. They were again and again renewed as the Minister proceeded with the following quotation :—“ I think I have marked strongly my sense of the responsibility of the opening of such a question. One thing I may add, because I think it a clear landmark. In any measure dealing with the Irish Church, I think, though I scarcely ever expect to share in such a measure, the Act of Union must be recognized, and must have important consequences, especially with reference to the position of the hierarchy.” Mr. GLADSTONE is evidently not one of the readers of the *Morning Herald*. Though the letter, on anonymous authority, had appeared in that newspaper, he heard of it for the first time when his attention was called to it by the Home Secretary. He asked for the reference. The extract was handed to him across the table. He read it carefully through, and Mr. HARDY pointedly requested him to rise in his place, and to say whether he did or did not write the letter. As Mr. GLADSTONE, after having finished the perusal of the extract, made no remark, the Ministerial cheers were renewed, and their journals the next morning commented on Mr. HARDY’s quotations as a triumphant “ exposure” of Mr. GLADSTONE’s inconsistency. Now, it strikes me that this is a very strange way of defending the Irish Establishment. Whether Mr. GLADSTONE did or did not write the letter which Mr. HARDY, a Cabinet Minister, quoted, it does not make the case of the State Church in any respect better. The personal question may be of some interest ; but it has nothing whatever to do with the political question before Parliament and the Nation. The letter, too, after being published anonymously in a newspaper, and being obviously a private communication, is quoted without notice by a Minister who sets himself categorically to inquire whether the leader of the Opposition was the author of it or not. The rule has always been to judge public men by their public acts. The letter is said to have been written previous to the general election of 1865 to one of Mr. GLADSTONE’s constituents who made his vote contingent on the answer he might receive. But Mr. GLADSTONE had made a speech on the Irish Church during the session of 1865. Though some of the Tory organs still presume to refer to that address as another proof of his alleged inconsistency, it is an undoubted fact that Mr. GLADSTONE then condemned the Irish Establishment in the most marked manner, and expressly reserved the question as “ one of the future.” This speech was indignantly commented upon by the Irish Tory Members and the Irish Tory organs as unequivocally hostile to the continuance of the Establishment. It was this expression of opinion on the Irish Church, with a similar expression of opinion during the same Session on Reform, that led to Mr. GLADSTONE’s rejection by the



Oxford University. Mr. GLADSTONE's correspondent must have thought that there was some doubt of Mr. GLADSTONE's soundness on the Irish Church; or why should he have written to Mr. GLADSTONE at all on the question? The letter, too, in no way defends the Irish Establishment. It admits, indeed, that the question is not immediately pressing; and that the author did not expect it soon to be engaging the attention of Parliament. But beyond intimating that Mr. GLADSTONE had some doubts on the interpretation of the Act of Union with regard to the position of the hierarchy, in the event of Parliament undertaking to redress the grievance of Establishment, it really says little. It implies, indeed, that the Irish Establishment could not be defended. Events have moved faster than Mr. GLADSTONE expected them to move during the last Session of Lord PALMERSTON's Administration, and the progress of opinion has been much more rapid. And that's all. Since Mr. GLADSTONE wrote that letter—if he did write it—we have had the *Habeas Corpus* Act suspended for three years, and we have—Can Mr. GATHORNE HARDY realize the fact?—had Household Suffrage conceded in England by himself and his colleagues. The Irish Reform Bill, now before the House, proposes a great reduction in the Borough Franchise, which the Ministers will maintain to be equivalent to the Household Suffrage of the English Reform Act. Mr. HARDY is very much mistaken if he thinks that such a Reform in the representation could be made without having great effect on other political questions. It has precipitated all other reforms. As I have repeatedly said, it at once made the Irish Church untenable. For what is the Irish Church? It is the Church of some five hundred thousand people in a country of between five and six millions, and in this country nearly all householders are soon likely to have votes. Household Suffrage is the death-knell of privilege; and especially of the privileges of the Church of a small minority of the population. Mr. GLADSTONE might not believe in 1865 that he would be called upon to disestablish the Irish Church; but neither did he believe in 1865 that two years afterwards Household Suffrage would be a great fact, and that it would be conceded by Mr. GATHORNE HARDY and his Tory colleagues. No person disputes the sincerity of Mr. MACAULAY's convictions on the necessity of a Reform in the representation before the year 1831. But we find him in 1828, at the close of his review of Hallam's Constitutional History, speaking of the time for that Reform as indefinitely distant, though certain one day to come. The shrewdest political observers could not foresee in 1865, while Lord PALMERSTON was still Prime Minister, that Household Suffrage would so soon be carried, and that the Irish Church might soon be disestablished. Had Lord PALMERSTON's life and strength been prolonged until this time, these questions might, though with some difficulty, still have been deferred. It is no secret that so long as Lord PALMERSTON lived, Mr. DISRAELI could not "educate" the Tories, and that they never would during Lord PALMERSTON's life, have supported Household Suffrage. It is, indeed, amusing to see the followers of a Prime Minister who, in 1844, solemnly declared the Irish Establishment an "alien Church," and who, not three weeks ago, acknowledged, on his "historical conscience," that those words were true, accusing Mr. GLADSTONE of inconsistency, because he has repudiated the prejudices of his youth, and has moved with the progress of the times. There is not so much inconsistency between Mr. GLADSTONE's private letter in 1865 and his actions now, as there is between Mr. DISRAELI's letter to Lord DARTMOUTH



last week and the amendment which Lord STANLEY moved last Monday ; or between the speech Lord STANLEY then delivered and the address of Mr. GATHORNE HARDY on the following night.

Most anxiously desiring that the grateful admiration in which you are held throughout the Nation for the boldness and the brilliancy of your views of Human Rights,—“THE SUPREME GOOD OF THE STATE,”—shall farther stimulate your exertions, sustain your moral courage, and strengthen your determination in promoting the progressive amelioration of mankind,—I am, dear Sir, your cordial co-operator in the universal cause of humanity,

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER XII.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
April 4th, 1868.

The Right Hon. B. DISRAELI, Prime  
Minister of Britain.

DEAR SIR,—I think there is not now much left of the pretence that the Coronation Oath and the Act of Union can prevent this or any Parliament from doing justice upon the Irish Establishment. Probably this ridiculous plea, which was raised with such a flourish at the outset of the debate, was best laughed out of existence by Mr. LOWE, when he pointed out that it was employed by the side which maintained that the present Parliament could not bind the next one to take in hand Disestablishment ! The Irish Church stands by itself, a melancholy failure as regards its mission, a consecrated block-house, an episcopal garrison, an insult, and an irreligious, because oppressive institution. The Tories bewail the historical event of Catholic Emancipation, and proudly recount the part they took against it. What can we say of such legislators, who have about them the charm of an ancient ruin, picturesque and romantic, but utterly without use ? General PEEL took great credit to himself for having said, on the occasion of his anti-Emancipation vote, that “the times would change.” Now “the times *are* changed ;” and after such a verification the good old Tory professional mankiller asks with prophetic complacency if he was not right ? Nay, more, he foreboded that Catholic Emancipation would lead to Disestablishment ; and, lo ! the thing is taking place ! Of course it is. Justice makes justice easy ; and good laws lead to better laws. If he will repeat his vaticination he may complete his fame as a seer, for assuredly the times will go on changing, and this approaching act of equity will necessitate other and nobler acts. What more needs to be said about it all, as Mr. LOWE observed, than that out of every 100 Irishmen, there are 78 Catholics, 12 Protestants, and 10 Dissenters, and that the last are bribed with the *Regium Donum* to let the second have all the tithes and endowments of the country ? The Tory party, as the same speaker pointed out, are mad enough to bind this dead and rotten injustice to the living body of the English Church, or to defend it by the miserable plea that it is not worth while to do a piece of honest restitution ! Mr. LOWE made a telling assault upon the zigzag policy,—if policy it can be called,—with which such fears and follies are championed. He compared the Irish Establishment very eloquently to a tree without blossoms, without fruit, sterile, con-



demned, cumbering the ground, "as an Establishment." From Sir JOHN GRAY the Establishment met with an outspoken expression of hostility; and in his best style, Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE overwhelmed the institution and its defenders with a torrent of ridicule. There is, however, no need for much further talk to secure the final judgment; the case is clear. Justice and real religious interests are on one side; fear, pride, and Episcopal Christianity on the other. Europe watches to see whether the Legislative Assembly which boasts to be the freest and most enlightened in the world, has love of freedom enough to abolish a monument of tyranny, and confidence enough in right to abolish a palpable wrong. "As an Establishment it must cease to exist": the mover of the amendment owned as much by the speech in which he chilled his party with cold truth and good sense. The abandonment will not entail the slightest loss to the power of Britain or to the true interests of religion. Nothing has been more distinctly brought out in this debate than the fact, that, in spite of party intrigue or the dissent of a sectarian minority, Ireland will be more than conciliated,—will be overborne with gratitude by an act of pure justice which has been deferred for centuries; and in the nobler influences thus newly established among the fervid and sensitive, religion itself must share the conquest newly achieved for the British Crown in the name of Political Justice.

Nothing more clearly indicates the exact position of the Church Establishment in Ireland than the debate, which was begun so suddenly, which was conducted so vigorously, and that ended so satisfactorily. The Irish people have had amongst them for centuries an institution which could not bear the light of examination, and which was sustained by a forced toleration, instigated by an unmeaning prejudice. At all times there was a war between the sentiment that revolted from imposture and the interest that recognized it; and inasmuch as the selfish generally predominates over the generous, the supremacy of wrong was maintained in the teeth of the indefeasible claims of justice. Under such circumstances, it required moral boldness to attack obstinacy, scientific faith to encounter bigotry, mental strength to ensure triumph. Under ordinary circumstances, it would have taken years to clear the ground for the attack which was made with lofty boldness, carried on with chivalrous daring, and conducted to a most honorable termination. The Church Establishment was trenched round and round with ramparts of ancient date and mould. Those who raised them bequeathed their defence to their successors, and left them a legacy of service which, however ignoble, was not lightly to be discarded. With this inheritance were bound up obligations, which misguided conscience and misguided desires accepted as duties, and which to the last will be relied upon as the justification of theoretical error and political wrong. Thirty years ago, all the arguments latterly advanced against the existence of Ireland's greatest grievance were stated with an intellectual force and eloquence to which cotemporary genius and zeal could impart no additional lustre. Nay, more, I question but the denunciations launched against what was regarded as a scandal in 1830, were more vehement and sincere than those leveled against what is looked upon as an intolerable grievance in 1868. Reformers must, therefore, trace the manifestation and exercise of this new-born zeal in the cause of Justice to the right source; and, discarding platitude and affectation attribute it to the disaffection



which has made the wise think and the foolish fret. The throes of revolution have made the powerful quake; the multiplied shadows of a ubiquitous Nemesis have made the most daring tremble. The handwriting upon the wall was too visible to be ignored, and those who would avoid ruin had to acknowledge repentance. To the eternal credit of Mr. GLADSTONE it must be said that he has duly estimated, weighed, and met the crisis. It required no ordinary strength of mind to discard the chartered dilatoriness of years and to precipitate an issue from which some definite result should flow. It required no commonplace courage to head an onslaught which had all the appearance of a forlorn hope; it required no mean ability to achieve a victory which was considered, even at the present day, beyond the reach of political prowess. But as the Church Establishment was old in iniquity, as it had been often beleaguered, as it had survived many attacks, it could only be stormed by the sudden dash of a bold man, the vigor of a strong one, and the might of a powerful one. Thus it is I have ventured to say that the character of the late debate fully illustrated the condition of the Church Establishment; for Logic, Political Science, enlightenment, and honesty had to contend against prejudice, ignorance, and partiality; and in the final struggle the calm appeal to Justice had to meet the reckless defiance of audacity. The very essence of the question at issue may be found in Mr. GLADSTONE's and your speeches. All the floating logic and argumentation, which the tide of the great debate bore on its surface, were combined in the concentrated current in which our two great champions sought their goals. Conviction as well as interest had its culmination in those closing sentences which preceded the division. They embraced all that had been said before, and contained much that need not be said again. As regards yourself, it must be observed that you had to play a desperate game. Your principles and your policy had received a severe handling, not merely from your opponents, but from the ablest of those who by political profession might be considered your friends. Lord CRANBORNE, with the strength of a spirit which was not weakened by official pliability, tore to atoms the flimsy pretexts on which you based your ignominious prelude to a disgraceful retreat. He at least took his stand by the flag which he acknowledged, and to which he had vowed adherence; but even his honor, spotless as it was, could not prevent renegades from attempting a spurious imitation of its lustre. All the arguments of your Government were directed towards the justification of a policy which combined obdurate obstinacy with extravagant concession. Lord STANLEY was ready to break up, modify, reform, and retrench the Establishment. His declaration was not palatable to most of his followers, and, accordingly, many of his colleagues roundly repudiated his sentiments and scouted his propositions. It was reserved for you to give a harmonious picture, in so far as rhetoric could blend inconsistencies, of these political differences. You at least had no scruple in saying and unsaying, affirming and denying, promising and repudiating, encouraging and deceiving. Bitterly personal and egregiously egotistic, your vanity and your virulence ran in parallel lines, and nothing but the remonstrances of an impatient House seemed capable of controlling the vagrancy of a disordered mind and the excesses of an uncontrollable temper. You had nothing to urge which a Statesman would have condescended to advance,—no argument to use which a logical thinker would have deigned to employ.



Ready to take another leap in the dark, but restrained by the powerful hold of an immovable party, you had to prance in fetters and chafe against a galling bit. Your own convictions, the old opinions of your life, the long nurtured sentiments of many years of thought and experience, rose in arms against the utterances which expediency dictated, and in the conflict silent conscience was more powerful and effective than the bitter railing tongue. You made simply the speech of a bold partisan. Happy and effective only when you could deliver a blow against an enemy, and less happy than usual because of your irritation, you were importunate, infelicitous, and impotent in all your attempts to sustain the cunning design of your waning Statesmanship. Your sarcasms had the serpent's sting, but also the serpent's malice in them; your wit was too personal to be amusing, and your ingenuity had the quality which produces astonishment but does not cause respect. In a word, your fighting for the Church Establishment was like a lawyer pleading a cause which his conscience abhorred, but on which his reputation rested. In pleasing contrast to this sorry vacillating Statesmanship was Mr. GLADSTONE's bold and determined stand. He had no artifices to conceal, no tricks to explain, no double-dealing to justify. The past had no shame for him, the future no terrors. Armed with conviction, he shrank not from the course which duty dictated; and as fearless in its pursuit as in its adoption, he enunciated the principles which it will be as much his glory to carry out as it is his pride to avow. I could make allowances for your ambition, and for your natural embarrassments, which a characteristic vanity must, under existing circumstances, materially aggravate. Your spleen, your cunning, your dazzling ingenuity, and puzzling fictions, are all worthy of you; but there is a malignity and a political baseness in your last desperate resource for the retention of power from which charlatanism itself would revolt. The effort to raise a No-Popery cry,—the malignant device by which the removal of a flagrant abuse is associated with danger to the Throne and Constitution, is foreign to modern Statesmanship, and worthy only of the political profligacy of the times when honor was, if not unknown, at least unrecognized. The liberal Protestants of England and Scotland, and the staunch Catholics of Ireland have given an answer to this imputation. Loyal to the Throne and faithful to the Constitution, they do not shrink from uniting in an effort which must give stability to the one and strength to the other, and increase the blessings which both are intended to disseminate. Not a single Irish Catholic member deserted Mr. GLADSTONE in the late division. Irish representatives know the importance of the fight in which they are engaged,—they know that with the Church Establishment will disappear the worst evils of their country; and, alive to this fact, they have been faithful to their duty. The fight is commencing. Integrity, fidelity, and perseverance are necessary for its successful termination. I have no doubt of the triumphant result. The attack has been made under the right leader and with the right forces; and to your miserable Tory cry of "No Popery," four millions of voices, cheered with the prospect of legalized liberty, will answer "equality."

The complete success of Mr. GLADSTONE's first stroke against the doomed Irish Church Establishment has caused a considerable flutter amongst the Irish Tories. It is rumored that a large deputation from the State Episcopacy was in London during the recent debate,



and suggested to their Ministerial friends, as a compromise, the abolition of six of the present twelve bishoprics, and the giving of a considerable proportion, varying according to the opinion of the bishops from a third to a half, of the entire revenues of the Establishment. It is said that this idea has penetrated so deeply into the minds of those who are most interested in the saving of the Anglican Church in Ireland that an effort will be made to get the Royal Commission to indicate some such change as a suitable one, in order to give the Government an opportunity of maintaining their "consistency" by acting on the report of the Commission, and not on the suggestion which is now to be made through the Commission to them. A compromise is strongly advised by some of the London papers. Alluding to the largeness of Mr. GLADSTONE'S majority, they write :—"This majority speaks in language that cannot be misunderstood. Delay is possible,—the end is inevitable, unless those whose interests are involved take council together, and agree to such a compromise as may satisfy the exigencies of the hour. It may be that this would be regarded as a sacrifice of principle and expediency, and that earnest Churchmen will reject such a suggestion. This, however, is not the course which recent political experience would render advisable. We live in an age of compromises, and it is for those whose existence is at stake whether they will not be wise, and anticipate the coming storm." Rumors of the most dissimilar character are freely passing current through London society. One refers to the choice of a dissolution. They might as well talk of any other impossible eventuality. A dissolution is at any time resisted by the Sovereign, unless on the positive assurance of the Minister seeking the power that he can reverse, by a dissolution, the majority obtained yesterday morning against you! Besides, there *must* be a dissolution and a new Parliament elected early next Winter, which in itself would be sufficient to the Queen's objecting to a dissolution at present. It must be confessed, I think, that those who speculate on a resignation are equally incorrect. My belief is that you will hold on as long as you can, though it is said your forthcoming Budget will be anything but satisfactory, and will not tend to increase the confidence of the commercial classes in your Cabinet. The Dublin correspondent of the *Times*, whose strong leanings towards the "Hideous Scandal" and very evidently, almost unconsciously, if not quite so, admits the whole case against his favorite :—"Both parties are thoroughly convinced that the ultimate decision of the question rests with the British people, and no pains will be spared by each to enlist their support. Church defence meetings are still being held in various parts of Ireland. The defensive organization is becoming more energetic as the danger becomes more imminent; on the other hand, monster meetings are in contemplation to bring the weight of the popular feeling into the scale." There is a great deal of meaning in these few and apparently simple words. That a question whose decision vitally affects Ireland has had to be removed to the judgment court, not of the Imperial Parliament, but of the British *people*, imports much. Surely it is not a merely sentimental grievance that would be relegated to so vast a judicial body. If any doubt were felt about this, it would be removed by the concluding words of the paragraph I have quoted—"Monster meetings are in contemplation to bring *the weight of the popular feeling* into the scale." Hitherto we were told, by the same authority, that the people cared nothing about the "Church question," which was merely set afloat by



a few interested, professional agitators. The sweeping triumph of the Liberal party last night, or rather this morning, was really greater than at first appears, as not a few of its members, who would have voted with the majority, were absent.

It was in the midst of quite a hurly-burly that you rose in your most cheerful, and what you intended to be your most pleasing manner, to signify that, after all, it had been judged best to move the adjournment for the holidays, as usual, at the beginning of the evening, and proceeded to state that, on the possible but "unreasonable" supposition that Mr. GLADSTONE got a majority on the question that the Speaker do leave the chair, you should be prepared to consent to going into committee *pro forma*, and then that the Resolutions should be postponed until Monday, 28th inst. There was a good deal of amusement excited by your way of setting all this forth, which could not be understood from any description. The proposition was accepted by Mr. GLADSTONE with a slight protest on the ground that he did not desire to give the British people an idea that there was haste or hurry in dealing with the question in hand,—a remark which was much cheered; while he bantered you about his having seen more strange things than that there should be a majority against you. The House seemed to take it that you were only exercising a wise prevision under the circumstances, in the event gentlemen's minds were relieved by the carrying of the adjournment finally. By this time there was, if that be possible, a still larger audience than on the previous nights of the debate; and conspicuous amongst the spectators were Prince ARTHUR, Prince CHRISTIAN, and Prince TECK. There was so much talk and confusion that most of the notices passed unobserved, though Mr. OTWAY let it be generally known that he means to move in the matter of the double government of the army, and the relations between the War Department and the Horse Guards. Most of the mass of matter intervening between the adjourned debate had been cleared away, when Mr. VANCE, and after him Mr. WHALLEY, interposed with demands on Mr. GLADSTONE to state what he meant to do with the *Regium Donum* and the grant to Maynooth. He gave an answer to the former under protest, but observed a becoming silence towards the latter gentleman. At length, an hour later than usual, Mr. COLERIDGE was allowed to resume the debate on the Irish Church; and he proceeded to deliver a speech of great rhetorical power, commencing with close argument, rising to tempered emphasis when he spoke of the Irish Church historically and socially, and being specially incisive when he was showing up the members of your Government as they appeared in the debate. It was one of those addresses to which the House listens intently, checking cheers that ever and anon involuntarily bubble up, lest a word should be lost, but giving itself ample compensation for this reticence by a very whirlwind of applause on the graceful and eloquent peroration. After him there was an anti-climax, for Mr. BERESFORD HOPE was allowed to perform, with eminent success, the function of clearing the House; and thus it happened that Mr. STANFELD'S massive speech was delivered under depressing circumstances; which, however, did not seem to influence him detrimentally. Besides, he was subjected to a very great disadvantage, in being interrupted when in full swing by a summons from the Lords to attend a Royal Commission. It then became Lord Mayo's duty to speak to the people outside through the press,—for there was very little House to address,—



and he did so in his usual quiet manner, and from his usual point of view. There was a rush of candidates for the next word, and out of them was chosen Colonel GREVILLE-NUGENT, who was followed by Sir CHARLES LANYON, thus keeping up the party see-saw. Somehow Sir THOMAS LLOYD got in something about the Church in Wales, and then another son of Lord ABERCORN, the Viscount HAMILTON, made his first speech, but with nothing of the "go" of his brother, who appeared on the previous evening. While he was speaking, and just at ten o'clock, you, who had been absent for a while, returned to your place, and immediately afterwards Prince ARTHUR, Prince CHRISTIAN, and Prince TECK, who had been away, resumed their seats in the gallery. The main topic of Mr. CARDWELL's speech was a challenge to you to lay down some definite issue on which a decision might be arrived at; and the challenge was instantly answered by your appearance, and you received an ovation from your followers. You began in calm and measured tones to justify the course taken by your Government in meeting the motion, stating that it was just doubtful whether moving the "previous question" would have been satisfactory; while to have moved a direct negative would have been to deny that any change was necessary in the Irish Church, whereas you were of opinion that considerable modifications were necessary in that institution; and hence the amendment, which presented an unequivocal issue, but which, in conformity with an axiom of Sir ROBERT PEEL, did not signify the policy of your Government. This naturally caused much good-humored laughter, probably the exact object intended, being the first step in "educating" the House to receive your speech without an active spirit of antagonism! Having thus made the House pleasant with you, then you suddenly went into sharp criticism on the suddenness of Mr. GLADSTONE's convictions, and, in high-sounding phrase, and with elevated voice, protested against Parliament being called on to strike at a vital article of the Act of Union at eight days' notice. You had thus got into what may be called your grand manner, but almost immediately you again became colloquial. Then you fell sarcastically on Lord CRANBORNE, admitting him to be a man of great power, not wanting in vindictiveness, and a master of invective,—which, however, wanted finish. You alluded, amidst some rather disapproving noises, to that noble lord's faculty of writing anonymous attacks, and taunted him with his opposition to a Reform Bill which would, you believed, produce a spirited and patriotic Parliament. Wondrously amused was the House when you talked of Mr. LOWE rivalling Lord CRANBORNE, and coming, you "would not say out of his cave," to join in a chorus of railing against the Government. It was with an approach to dignity that you declined, from the place in which you stood, to defend your character and career against the attacks which had been made upon you. Then your history of Mr. LOWE's universal hatreds, including, until now, "when the hour and the man had come,"—even Mr. GLADSTONE himself,—was inimitably droll, but not more droll than a statement "that you never attacked any one in your life." Here you were interrupted by boisterous shouts of incredulity and cries of "PEEL;" but you slid out of the difficulty by quietly adding, "unless you had been first assailed." Next you set about to prove, somewhat laboriously, that there was no crisis just now in Ireland.

The mode in which you disposed of the idea that the Irish are a conquered race was, indeed, very humorous, and probably the most



laughter came from the Opposition side. Nevertheless, they gave a very significant cheer when you said that you were about to deal with a practical question ; so significant that you tried to justify your having hitherto mainly bantered with the subject. With some solemnity you proceeded to enunciate a policy of the utmost conciliation to Ireland,—a policy which you had always unswervingly maintained ; but, truth to say at this point you were a little dreary, speaking in a very low tone of voice ; you were only a little more energetic when you said that you meant to construct, and not to destroy in Ireland. Nor were you especially vigorous when you contrasted your policy with that of Mr. GLADSTONE. For the rest, there was a long-drawn-out and somewhat moony protest against the plunder of Churches generally, and the Church of Ireland in particular, and a lamentation over the passing away of that policy of conciliation which would have blended the Irish people into one, on the basis of equality ; while you reproduced your old argument that, if Government is dissociated from religion, it is a mere affair of police, and that you cannot connect Government with religion except by Establishments. Seeming to take a new departure, there was a loud cry of “ Divide ! ”—that is, the usual hint to curtail, and, indeed, to conclude. Your peroration consisted of mysterious talk about a combination of Ritualism and Popery, of which Mr. GLADSTONE was the representative, to shake the tenure of the Crown,—an attempt which would meet with your determined opposition. Calmly, but emphatically, Mr. GLADSTONE began by uttering some scathing words about the wandering and irrelevance of a speech which seemed to be the product of a heated imagination, and proceeded to treat in like fashion most of those passages which you seemed to plume yourself on as most pointed, a lofty scorn predominating in his voice, manner, and language. Turning from personal retort, he commenced and continued a statement-of-fact explanation, in reply to arguments used against him, all through the debate, with a clearness, sequence, and spontaneity which contrasted strongly with your cumbrous and erratic utterances. With a rushing peroration he concluded a comprehensive and compact speech, full of his special characteristics, amidst applause so long, so strong, and so universal, as to indicate that it came from a united party this time at least. The succeeding scene, beginning with the turning out of the strangers, at the head of whom was the Prince of WALES, was familiar in its features, but fresh in its excitement. When Mr. GLYN, assuming for the first time the proud function of announcing a Liberal victory, headed the tellers, the shouts were those of a frenzy of joy, exaggerated, if possible, when the numbers were stated,—330 to 270 showing a majoring of 60 for the preliminary motion. Then the question that the House do go into committee was put, and another division took place, rather more quietly. The result was nearly as satisfactory as before, for the Liberals won by 56, the numbers being 328 to 272. Mr. GLADSTONE formally stated his first Resolution in committee, progress was immediately reported, and, with one more lusty shout from the Liberals, the House dissolved away.

Diversities of talents,—of mental gifts,—are as indispensable in the present day as in any former age. One star differs from another in the mental and social world as well as in the physical realms of space. One man shines brightest in the select social circle of intimate friends,—another on the platform before the great audience of the inquiring lovers of Science,—and a third in his place in Parliament



promoting the legal recognition of HUMAN RIGHTS,—“the supreme good of the State,”—in the presence of a promiscuous assembly of excited party men and time-serving politicians. The first of these is loved for his amiable qualities; the second on account of his intellectual resources,—his knowledge of Truth and Justice,—and rhetorical powers; and the third for his public and patriotic spirit. In some rare cases we find a union of all these attractions. Some can descend from the platform, where they had instructed, edified, and electrified the breathless audience, and mingle in the family or select circle, exhibiting all the sympathies of a friend and brother. There they cease to thrill by the force of their oratory, and give full vent to the flow of all the social affections. On the platform they command respect, and in the select circle they are loved and admired. A few there are who can extend their sympathies beyond the family and domestic circle,—beyond the love of a large audience, and embrace the welfare of the whole party with which they are connected,—of the entire population,—of the country in which they dwell,—and of the wide extent of the human family. Now they may be seen enjoying all the quiet and all the sweetness of chastened domestic affection,—now they enter the public meeting, and there fearlessly speak out their political principles to their various auditors,—now they ascend the public platform, and plead with energy and ardor the cause of suffering humanity. Now they plead party interests as if there were no others,—now they advocate HUMAN RIGHTS,—the cause of all mankind, as if no party interests existed. Now they fill with triumph the minds of some political faction,—now they wither with their frown the hopes of some rival organization. There are periods in the history of social and political progress when the platform and the social circle have to be summoned to the aid of political advancement,—periods when the politician must not only act his part well among his companions, but when he must appear on the platform as a combatant, and in the family and in the social circle as an advocate of Truth and Justice,—as the determined promoter of the *Equality* of HUMAN RIGHTS. There have been always some politicians specially qualified for such exigencies. They can delight a crowded audience as often as they speak,—they can draw out crowds as often as they appear on the platform,—and they can, like Mr. JOHN BRIGHT, from town to town, prosecute their mission with assiduity and success. Those who have formed their opinion of you from reading your speeches during your adventurous political career, and who have not had their views modified by ocular demonstration, have erred grievously regarding your personal appearance. There are certain mental manifestations which every man couples with certain physical developments. In reading an author, his image is intuitively formed on the retina of the mind's eye, and in general the image is just. With a crabbed, disjointed style, we naturally associate a bilious, unhealthy constitution,—a stunted, ill-arranged physical structure. With large, and generally correct and comprehensive views, couched in fierce sarcastic phrase, we associate a mind acting on the external world through organs not altogether pleasing to the eye. According to these principles, those who never saw you personally, but have formed their opinions entirely from your sayings, feel themselves puzzled when they enter the House of the Common men in Westminster. The image on their minds is that of an ESAU,—rough and savage, but the reality is meekness, blandness,—an impersonifi-



cation of good nature and all the graces. The speeches which produced the image were fierce, inflammatory, withering,—the person who delivered them is mild, gentle, and benignant. Instead of the political gladiator who fulminated thunderbolts against his opponents, we have one speaking peace and breathing good-will to all men. The puzzle can only be dissipated by a knowledge of the fact, that during your career in Opposition, you were not yourself. Your mind, naturally strong and ambitious, was depressed and distorted by the position you occupied as the tool of the Tories. There are politicians of decided talents who are left, through life, to labor in vain; but the man who possesses talent, and who is at all able to show that he possesses it, may have to endure the frown of jealous or of obtuse co-equals, but as soon as he risks the ocean of public opinion, he may count on a voyage safe and prosperous.

When a man has to complain of the work he is expected to do, and likewise has cause to grumble with the tools with which he is expected to accomplish it, he is certainly entitled to some share of public sympathy. Nothing could be more woe-begone than your countenance when you bewailed in the House of the Common men, the sad fate of a Minister so recently entrusted with power, suddenly and immediately called upon to revolutionize and turn topsy-turvy an Institution that had existed for centuries. The expression of your countenance, even in its most serene and satisfied aspect, is never very cheering or lively; but when troubles fall thick and fast around you, it assumes a most lugubrious, if not pitiful, appearance. It resembles that of an old clothesman from Petticoat-lane whose day walking has been unproductive of even a decent pair of trousers or a wearable hat. On the occasion to which I allude, you were in many respects more an object of sympathy than of envy. For the look that accompanied your plaintive outbreak was far more eloquent than the mere words in which it was uttered. You cast a wistful and desponding glance around the ministerial benches, and that glance as much as said,—“What can I do with the rubbish around me? Even if I were a Hercules, these pigmies would nullify my strength.” And, in reality you are entitled to our warmest sympathy, notwithstanding that your political career is more calculated to command contempt than to excite commendation. If you could only cast away the wretched nonentities that pertinaciously and parasitically cling to your coat-tails, and gather around you some of the leaders of the independent Liberals in Parliament, what a *Bright* future would be in store for yourself and the Nation! As it is, whatever may be your Parliamentary successes, your oratorical triumphs, or your party victories, your tenure of office cannot be considered secure from one day to another. Personally, you are popular enough in the country, but your surroundings inspire distrust. You resemble a skillful general in command of a worthless army. All your tact and talent avail nothing, for the stupidity and servility of your followers mar and nullify your best efforts. You are, as it were, the sole support of yourself and your Government. You have to confront a very formidable phalanx of oratorical, political, financial, scientific, and philosophical power, represented as it were, by Messrs. BRIGHT, GLADSTONE, MILL, sufficient to discomfort the most able of statesmen, even when well supported by his followers. But what can even a genius like your's be expected to effect with such dreary, almost worthless, colleagues and supporters as the MALMESBURYS, DEVONS, MARL-



BOROUGHs, MONTROSES, BUCKINGHAMs, MONTAGUES, HUNTS, and other ministers in and out of the Cabinet, that would inevitably be demolished by one logical sentence of Mr. MILL's, one sarcasm of JOHN BRIGHT's, or one of Mr. GLADSTONE's outbursts of eloquence! The British army has been compared to a band of Lions led by Asses, the rank-and-file being typified by the noble, and the officers by the less noble beast. It appears to me that the Tory forces are precisely in the opposite predicament, you as their leader being a giant in intellect, whilst themselves are little better than a flock of incapables, utterly unworthy the shepherd who has led them into the fat pasturage of Downing street. You may by the power of political chicanery, be victorious to-day over Mr. GLADSTONE, and consequently retain power, place, and patronage for a limited period of time; but it would be as preposterous to suppose that folly will ultimately prevail over wisdom and science, as to imagine that you as the Tory leader with your imbecile surroundings,—your Dukes, Lords, and Baronets, constituting the Tory Cabinet,—can long maintain your post in the face of the mental power by which you are opposed. Your Premiership, it must, however, be admitted, has fallen upon evil times. Your entrance into Downing street took place at a most unfortunate period. The Irish question at once fastened itself round your neck, and weighed upon you like a *Millstone*. The Irish question has strangled a dozen Ministries, and extinguished a score of statesmen, and this because none of them dare grapple boldly and manfully with the monster. Procrastination in dealing with Irish subjects has been the rock on which many Ministries have split, and possibly that of yours will be shipwrecked in a like manner. You may plead as an excuse for dilatory action, that the crew you command are not to be depended upon, and unequal to encounter the difficulties of the situation. This, after all, is the most valid, plausible excuse you can offer, but it will not satisfy the intelligent population of the Nation; and if you cannot obtain an efficient crew for your ship, the helm will assuredly be speedily wrested from your grasp, and placed in the hand of a more daring pilot, with more trustworthy followers. Strange indeed is the farce carried on between the fictitious and the real man, in your case,—between the masque and the countenance which it conceals,—you are always found of late acting a double-part, so that you can scarcely distinguish between Truth and Falsehood, and though fully aware of your specious pretexts you constantly dally with lies till you believe them to be truths.

Your Ministry may have its own work to do and its own testimony to bear; the measure of its departure from Truth and Justice being simply the measure of its unfaithfulness to its true vocation. But it does not follow that Reformers are to dwell patiently with error or make terms of peace with existing wrong. The evil of your policy may ultimately have a result for good, and yet, for its own sake, the evil must be openly and consistently opposed. The evil may even exist as the result of causes over which we had no control, but none the less is it to be drawn to light, and faithfully uprooted. The good in all parties should be welcomed, as hopeful and instructive to all; while the evil should be examined for the homage it pays by its contrast, to the good, and in order to receive the indignation of the intelligent and wise promoters of the legal recognition of HUMAN RIGHTS,—“The supreme good of the State.” The just anger of the wise and the far-



seeing, arising from a deep and powerful cause, is like the groundswell of the Atlantic, solemn and silent in its movements, though its power is in proportion ; whereas the brawling turbulence of the feeble-minded, trifling in itself, and excited by trifles, is like the ripple of the Summer squall, noisy and vexatious, but all on the surface, and gone as easily, and with apparently as little cause, as it is excited.

I am, dear Sir, still occupying the self-appointed and very important position of being your unpaid political preceptor and impartial critic, as well as the unfaltering foe of your affected fanaticism, and the fearless friend of freedom ; and, as you will also observe, one of those politicians who cannot be ensnared by your insidious eloquence, in which falsehood and a feigned sanctimoniousness usurp the semblance of truth and serious piety,

JOHN SCOTT.

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### LETTER XIII.

59, VICTORIA TERRACE, BELFAST,  
*April 4th, 1868.*

JOHN BRIGHT, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—From the moment of assembling last night, the House of the Common men presented that scene of excitement which usually heralds a great division. Every seat was taken ; and the manifest impatience with which honorable members heard the long list of questions and answers was broken only when Mr. DISRAELI, with more than ordinary blandness, told the House that should the Government amendment be defeated, Monday, the 27th instant, would be fixed for the discussion of Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions. After the patience of the House had been well-nigh exhausted, Mr. COLERIDGE began the adjourned debate in a speech that will long live in the memory of those who heard it. As a piece of art, the oration has seldom been equalled even in an assembly which has added imperishable chapters to the literature of debate. In singularly persuasive tones, and in a voice of silvery softness, he set forth the arguments with which the Irish Church had been defended ; and, with the skill of a trained dialectician, he then showed that, one and all, those arguments were not only unsound, but absolutely meaningless. None of the speeches which had been previously delivered, not even that of Mr. LOWE, was so full of close logical argument. Nor was the argument difficult to follow. Expressed in language of striking lucidity, the logical process was such as could not fail to reach the mind even of the dullest country gentlemen ; and when, after a beautiful peroration, Mr. COLERIDGE sat down amid the loud and prolonged cheers of the House, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had done the cause of religious Liberalism signal service. In the task before him he had many advantages, apart from his dialectical and rhetorical powers. He belongs to a family illustrious for its attachment to the Church of England, and for its union of mental gifts with religious fervor. Flippant young talkers, therefore, could not pretend that he was an apostle or emissary of the Liberation Society. He was able to discuss the question from an English Churchman's point of view, and from that point the Irish Church seems as hideous as from any other. Mr. COLERIDGE first took in hand the two great arguments of Toryism—that if Parliament



disestablish the Church of Ireland it will deal a blow at the "principle" of the connection between Church and State; and next, that the compact of the Union binds it not to disturb the existing arrangement. Reformers have repeatedly asked what is meant by the "principle" of establishments, and Mr. COLERIDGE showed that the word is simply a term by which loose thinkers attempt to hide their confusion of ideas. Such a "principle" has no existence. In one place Church establishments are good, in another bad. In England a connection between the Church and the State may be highly expedient; in Canada it would be most unwise; in India it would be insane. All that is meant by the big talk about "principle" is, that, if Parliament should cut the link between Church and State in Ireland, it shall furnish a ground for doing the same thing in England. But it shall do so only if the two Churches are alike, or if that of England is destined to sink as low as that of Ireland. Now, no person, not even Mr. MIALl himself, pretends that the two ecclesiastical bodies are on the same level; and, while the one can be attacked only because it is an establishment, the other invites the most complete condemnation simply because it is a bad establishment. If that of England should ever become the Church of a small minority, representing a dominant class, then, indeed, it would deserve to be smitten down for the same causes that will make Parliament smite down that of Ireland. Until that day the Church of England is safe; and those who predict the coming of such a day are their Church's worst foes; unlike the Hebrew prophet, they curse what they have been commanded to bless. But have the British people a right to touch the temporalities of the Irish Church? The Tory gentlemen say that the people forming the Nation have not; and on Tuesday night Mr. GATHORNE HARDY quoted from Sir JAMES GRAHAM a passage to the effect that Church property must be eternally sacred from the hand of appropriation. The fact is, as Mr. COLERIDGE said, that the whole of our statute-book gives the lie to that preposterous doctrine. In England, as in every other country, the State has always enforced its right to deal with the temporalities of the Church in the manner dictated by considerations of public welfare. But in this case, Reformers are told the Act of Union bars the way, since the fifth article of that compact provides for the continuance of the Establishment. A more futile argument could hardly be devised. If Parliament was competent to frame the Union, Parliament is competent to repeal it, or to alter it, or to set it aside in favor of another arrangement; and Parliament, indeed, has already shown that it knows itself to be thus competent, by altering the fourth article of the settlement. If the fourth may be altered, why not the fifth? The real question is,—Does the welfare of the Empire call for the revision of the compact? If so, the revision must take place, no matter what Lord PLUNKET said forty years ago. It is hoped, for the credit of Parliament, that these simple truths, taken from the alphabet of Politics, will not have to be stated much oftener before they become part of the creed of Toryism. The member for Exeter was succeeded by a speaker of a very different stamp. If the University of Cambridge has any regard for logic, it ought to call upon Mr. BERESFORD HOPE to resign his lately-acquired seat on account of his extraordinary ideas of logical argumentation. To refute, or even to state his arguments is, of course, superfluous. Fortunately, they were followed by a strong and luminous speech from Mr. STANSFELD, which was one of the most



valuable contributions to the debate. Mr. STANSFELD is never afraid or ashamed of justice, and language like his disinfects the atmosphere of discussion from the miasma of falsehood and intrigue. He pointed out that the issue of the division was single and simple, that the Amendment would be fatal to action, and that it was meant to be fatal. The Government policy—if it could be called a policy—was, he said, to buy a renewal of Protestant ascendancy by the bribe of a Catholic Endowment, and to amuse the world by manipulating the cash accounts of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Mr. STANSFELD did good service in manfully denouncing the view that Ireland cannot be won by Britain. Were she thus inveterately hostile, the case would be hopeless. But, as the member for Halifax admirably said, let Britain only recognize and respect her individuality—let the other divisions of the Nation treat her as a warm-tempered sister in the family of the Empire—and Britain can and shall win her affection. The disestablishment of the Irish Church is among the first steps that must be taken to secure that blessing. “Do not talk,” said Mr. STANSFELD, “about the business of the Session, nor try to shunt us with questions about the destination of the surplus.” The Resolutions were and are justified; because, from the moment they were pronounced, Ireland was sure at last that British Statesmen were in earnest, and that the “Garrison Church,” whether it were surrendered at the summons or defended, was equally doomed. Who can speak of Ireland without a mingled feeling of admiration and regret? Ireland is a country lying for generations beneath the contemptible despotism of political rulers, whose weakness and insignificance convert obedience into a crime, and make the semblance of loyalty but an imputation upon manhood. Lord MAYO quoted PLUNKET, GRATTAN, PEEL, and various other antique authorities, to keep himself in countenance while once more defending the Establishment in Ireland. Could he not see that it would be about as rational to cite CICERO in favor of a College of Augurs, or Archbishop LAUD in support of the relations of Church and State? The irrelevancy of the Tory pleas have been ludicrous. At one time it is the sacred interests of religion which are at stake; at another the holy rights of property. The authors of the arguments have attempted the impossible task of at once “serving God and MAMMON,” and have necessarily failed. In fact, till the outrageous ecclesiastical outpost was seriously attacked, its own garrison did not know how defenceless it was. In the same way the Government has gradually discovered the intensity of Parliamentary and public feeling, and the amendment would never have been made, if the Ministers had known that the whole Nation was so sick of “modifications.” Justice, frank equalization of rights, generous resolve to satisfy and conciliate, sisterly goodwill—these and not “modifications” are the things which must govern all the British people do; if we want to preserve Ireland, let alone Churches and Endowments. What Mr. CARDWELL-described, to the shame of Reformers all, is a conquered, not a kindred land; kindred Reformers must now make it, or lose it. Mr. DISRAELI could not pretend to face such facts, nor did it need the renewed eloquence and fidelity of Mr. GLADSTONE to recapitulate them; and, long before the debate was finished, its inevitable issue was seen.

There are many Tories who now entertain the idea that at a certain point legislation should stop, or rather, never be commenced; and as



they believe the abolition of the Church Corporation in Ireland to be inconsistent with the Oath taken by the QUEEN on her Coronation, they argue either that the Oath should be amended, or that the Church should not be disturbed. There is a little logical difficulty or two which Tories are apt to overlook: as, for instance, the QUEEN has already taken the Oath, so that whatever virtue is in it is in full force, and cannot be diminished by another Coronation and an amended Oath. If Oaths bind the conscience, the conscience cannot be unloosed; and if they do not, they are unnecessary. But, again, if there was a demise of the Crown, and the PRINCE OF WALES were called to the throne, we might pass any number of Bills inconsistent with the Coronation Oath, between the day of his accession, and the day on which he was called upon to swear in Westminster Abbey. The one fact to be considered is: Does the Oath bind the Sovereign in her prerogative or in her legislative character as the First Estate of the realm? A moment's thought by any mind with neither aristocratic nor clerical tendencies, will settle the matter, and hold the Oath to be merely in restraint of prerogative. JAMES II, one of the meanest organisms that ever took human shape, who held the doctrine that royalty was a thing from Heaven, with a right Divine to govern wrong, claimed and exercised a "dispensing power," releasing his subjects from the penalties of law and legislation, and of his own mere motion, and the caprice he called his will, enforced penalties unknown to the Constitution. For his "dispensing power" the English people dispensed with him, and he fled into an exile from which he was doomed never to return. The sagacious men who invited WILLIAM OF ORANGE over to England took care to bind him by an Oath when he ascended the throne, that he would not alter the law or the institutions of the Nation, except with the consent of Parliament; in other words, that all alterations shall be made by the consent of the Three Estates of the realm. The King and Queen are, therefore, reduced to the first place in the Estates; the prerogative is limited, and can only be exercised through responsible Ministers; and the Ministers must be men chosen by Parliament, indirectly, out of persons entitled to their confidence. The simple truth is that the QUEEN is a cypher in government, representing only the necessity for an enormous outlay and a court; and the Tory Peers seem unable to comprehend that since two Reform Bills have passed, they are but cyphers too, with a veto they dare not exercise, except as a plea in bar, in order to obtain delay in judgment, just as a dishonest acceptor pleads that his acceptance is a forgery, so that he may obtain time from his creditor. The aristocracy are alarmed, and Tory Statesmen only represent the feeling of alarm. They fear so much, that they dare not confess their fears. They would like the abolition of the Irish Church Corporation to be stopped by a technicality, in order that they may be saved from the ignominy of giving-in to the people, or the still more disastrous consequences which would flow from their opposition. They try to believe that five most respectable old noblemen of the Privy Council of 1838, all of whom are now dead except Lord Russell, intended to make the QUEEN swear to preserve the United Church of England and Ireland "to the utmost of her power." GEORGE IV was the first king who ever swore to do so, and the Oath of the "first gentleman in Europe," must have given great satisfaction to the priests of a United Church, who every Sunday had to read the Ten Commandments, as proper to be believed by the common people. The



QUEEN, however, also swore to rule with the advice and assistance of Parliament; and if she is advised by Parliament to abolish a Corporation of men, in order that the now unestablished doctrine may become established, she may reasonably say that she is protecting the Protestant religion by the best means in her power—the Parliament. Aristocracy fails to see this, because what Aristocracy desires is to uphold corporations and endowments, so that they may subserve as so many buffers between the peers and the people. With the aristocracy, the Crown itself was a mere contrivance to save them from another CROMWELL in the time of JAMES II. They became revolutionists, but took good care that the revolution was made a good thing for themselves, and they made the king swear that he would not exercise a “dispensing power” over estates acquired by confiscation, as JAMES II once ventured to do. The Corporation of the Church in Ireland was a politic contrivance for the representation of Soil-Lords who did not dare to reside amongst tenants whose ancestors had been defrauded. Therefore, the “great revolutionary families” sent parsons over to Ireland with instructions to teach the Protestant doctrine at the cost of Catholic tithe cess. This is the miserable arrangement which the Tories wish to protect by the Oath of the Sovereign on her Coronation—not because they care for Protestant truth, but because they care for Protestant titles and tenures—all of them resting on no better foundation than the Act of Confiscation. The thirty-two thousand Lords of the soil are very much alarmed lest they may not have a good time of it. They have tried smiles and caresses upon the middle classes, and have given existence to snobbery to an extent inconsistent with British manliness; and they have, with cruelty, cast off their middle-class friends when their purposes have been served. The aristocracy are capable of fawning upon the working classes when it serves their purpose, and make men, occasionally, “pleased with a rattle, or tickled with a straw,” give up the claim which humanity has upon them. Aristocracy is merely a social arrangement founded upon pride, selfishness, and cruelty. The aristocrat seeks to live out of the industry, and to be enriched by the intellectual capacity, of the people. The lordly owner of barren acres which cannot be cultivated waits the arrival of the puddler and collier to dig for ironstone and coal, and to pay him the royalty which shall enable the feudal lord to “feast a thousand vassals.” It is the fault of the system that men should thus be crushed in order to maintain drones in the hive of industry. We have given to lords the political power to found an aristocracy, and the sight of “the means to do ill deeds make ill deeds done.” These men cannot conceive why the people of Ireland should not consent to starve, or emigrate, and say no more about it. A system so faultless, as a pure faith which no disinterested Irishman believes, a cordon of ecclesiastical policemen, in aid of mounted police more efficaciously armed still, and special Acts of Parliament to execute exceptional laws, appear to aristocracy exactly the state of things needed for the institution. It exists by selfishness and cruelty, absorbing the gains and taking the profits of the labor of the people into the land itself, and aided by the credulity and ignorance, which national education only can remove; so we must wait and take justice by instalments. But, for all that, aristocracy is doomed, for every ship which takes away a load of emigrants, will some day bring back an equal load of passengers to tell us what can be done where land is free from evil influences; and where the men who govern



are the men who claim the confidence of their fellow-men, not because they are the eldest sons of their fathers, but because they are wiser and more virtuous than men merely born in the purple.

Apart from its great political importance, redoubled by the strong closing majority of sixty, the debate of this week was a happy intellectual display. It may be said that the good speaking, as far as argument went, was on one side; but then the Liberal orators who supported the Resolutions differed considerably in tone and style. Mr. ROEBUCK, Mr. OSBORNE, Mr. COLERIDGE, and Mr. LOWE agreed only as to the main point at issue, and were abundantly diverse in tone and illustration. That the Treasury Bench should fare badly in the mere debate was not exactly to be expected. They had to defend an old institution, connected with much public life, and entwined with many of the deepest prejudices of the Nation. Such incidents might not help a speaker pleading before a judicial tribunal, but they should have been great aids in addressing an assembly where party feeling, and the love of combative discussion always run high, and where plausible arguments, spiced with bitterness and brought up hot, have an effect that they sadly want when served up coldly in the newspapers the next day. Yet even when I look at the debate from this point of view,—even when I regard it as an intellectual tournament,—I find that the Tory orators were not successful; though, on ordinary occasions, the party that counts Mr. DISRAELI, Lord STANLEY, Mr. HARDY, and Mr. HENLEY cannot be said to be weak in discussion. Lord STANLEY is usually so effective a speaker that his negative result on Monday was very remarkable; it was probably due to all-sufficient causes. In the first place, no one believes that the Foreign Secretary can support the Irish Church as it is; and, though he agreed with his colleagues in the plea for more deliberate treatment of the subject, yet he had nothing to say in defence of the institution to which many of them are passionately attached. This naturally had a refrigerating effect, both on the orator and his audience. A secondary effect was that the speech did not deal with the actual debate: it might have told as an essay on the Resolutions alone; but it was singularly out of place as an answer to Mr. GLADSTONE's opening address. The effect was unhappy; and Mr. LOWE, with great wit, compared it to those Bosphorus guns built into a wall, that will destroy a ship which stands exactly opposite to them, but cannot be moved up or down, or turned aside, and that bombard the air if the enemy makes the least move. Had Mr. GLADSTONE made no speech to explain his Resolutions, the arguments would have hit the mark; but the enemy moved, and Lord STANLEY abstained from shifting his guns or taking the new range of his foe. That the Foreign Secretary did not defend the Church provoked Mr. MONCRIEFF to wit; he said that Lord STANLEY simply echoed Mr. DISRAELI—"with a difference;" for when the Premier called out "No surrender," his colleague gave back the last word, and we had "Surrender" as the cry. The debate of Monday closed with Lord CRANBORNE's acid oratory; it tickled the House, especially when "I cannot forget last year" implied an invective in a few words; but it added nothing to the debate as a war of arguments, nor did it supply any of those touches of humor or piquant sarcasm which lighten or ornament a speech. Lord CRANBORNE seems to detest Mr. DISRAELI, but he has no other qualification for sarcastic attack. As regards immediate effect, Mr. HARDY's speech of Tuesday evening was a splendid success; in fact, the leading Lon-



don Reporters say, "We seldom remember an oration that so cordially delighted the House." Lord STANLEY's speech had damped the Tories and depressed the Liberals: the one side missed some rallying cry; the other feared that, after all, there might not be a good fierce fight. The Home Secretary's speech dissipated the rival apprehensions, and everybody was pleased. Quite apart from politics, or statesmanship, or wisdom, or after-effect of legislation, the House likes a battle, and a staunch politician standing to his guns gives the members intense delight. They naturally forget for the moment that hesitation and doubt may be quite as manly and honest as unquestioning faith, and that to "avoid extremes" may not be a temporizing policy, but the result of earnest and conscientious thought. In the heat of debate, in the late hours of the night, when hundreds hang on an effective orator's lips, such considerations would spoil the amusement of the evening and paralyze the fun of the fight. But Mr. HARDY's success was not due solely to this revival of the rapture of the combat; he showed himself to be a most effective antagonist in his quiet way. His castigation of Lord CRANBORNE was not the less severe that it was delivered as if Mr. HARDY could not help telling his noble friend some disagreeable truths; his quotation from Mr. GLADSTONE's letter was telling for the time,—though only for the time,—especially when accompanied by the rather theatrical pause to allow the leader of the Opposition to deny its authenticity. But, as in the old Greek plays, a good part of the speech was the stentorian chorus of the country gentlemen. "We," says the *Daily Telegraph*, "are staunch Liberals, we yield to nobody in well-regulated party feeling, and we do not like to admit that Tories are better than Liberals in anything; but we must say that in good cordial cheering we never approach the Tory party. Our vital organs may be in the right place, but their lungs are in splendid order. Perhaps it is in the hunting-field that these squires get the practice of putting forth a volume of sound which can ring and re-echo around the House with such power that we almost fear it may tell in the division, and we have to refresh ourselves by a good long steady stare at the cheerful countenance of our whip before we can realize that, after all we are a majority of the House. We deeply regret this painful inferiority of our party. Could not Mr. GLYN take out squads of young members—the Irish ought to know something of shouting—and train them, say at Richmond Park, opposite Lord RUSSELL's lodge, in good, steady, great, jubilant, defiant cheers? A deal might be done by practice."

Mr. GOSCHEN, who followed Mr. HARDY on Tuesday, was singularly tame; but, after a succession of minor speakers, the Attorney-General for Ireland excessively amused the House by a speech which, in manner, delivery, and matter, was the joke of the debate. Had Mr. WHITESIDE been in office at present, the Irish Church would have been helped to die in the most solemn and effective way: there was a fifty funeral-horse grandeur, a kind of fine physical pathos, about that exuberant orator of the old school. But Mr. WARREN is the funniest defender of the faith that even Ireland has ever sent forth: his appearance, his style, his blunders, his gesture, his oddities, would relieve the most melancholy occasion. Irish funerals are frequently occasions for mirth, and Mr. WARREN kept up the tradition: he "waked" the Irish Church in the good old way, and imported unexpected but welcome hilarity into a discussion that some persons considered almost too grave. The evening closed with one of your speeches. Mr. Dis-



RAELI may be the schoolmaster, but you are the adoptive father of the Tory party. You have taken them up paternally, and you aid their teacher's more pedantic work by lessons which rise far above the day school of party. Such is the catholicity of the advice which you gave the Tories that your harangue had all the effect of a lofty homily, and in a manner you "blessed them unaware." The debates of Thursday and Friday were full of personal interest; nearly every speaker looked at the question from his own point of view. Mr. ROEBUCK declared his intention to vote with Mr. GLADSTONE, but his speech was an odd mixture of extreme opinions and queer qualifications. For instance, he said "I am quite ready to disestablish and disendow any Church I can lay my hands on." Yet he afterwards asked, "Is this a time to offend loyal Irish Protestants by disendowing their Church?"—a question that, if it had any force, is always pertinent. He also invented a new description of himself as an "Imperial Englishman"—an autographic epithet not likely to find favor in any but Mr. ROEBUCK's own eyes. Mr. HENLEY then interposed with his usual concentrated, and, truth to say, coarse common sense. Everybody knows, in his own family or circle, old gentlemen, very honest worthy men who speak on all topics, even the most ticklish, with a thorough disregard of conventional delicacy, and say what they mean in words rather too plain for ladies' ears. Mr. HENLEY brings into politics this broad kind of talk, and blurts out illustrations much more vigorous than refined. Since the ladies in the gallery can blush unobserved he evidently ignores their presence. General PEEL, who followed, was happy in two or three of those epigrams that he can bring forth with such effect. "I would not shout 'No Popery' outside our churches, but I should always wish to see it inscribed inside," is, though uttered by a Tory, a happy motto for men who are at once Liberal in politics and Protestant in creed. Earl RUSSELL had compared the Liberal party to road-makers; and General PEEL's remark, that they were rather sign-posts who showed the way and never traveled it, was one of those touches that always tell in a debate—a hostile metaphor sent back to the foe. Mr. LOWE spoke at the dinner-hour; and though his speech was keenly critical and apparently ingenuous, it was not a success: it tore the arguments of Ministers to tatters; but, after all, that is small work. The great power of sarcasm and invective possessed by Mr. LOWE is weakened by a certain air of unreserved enmity: he speaks as if he were resolved to say anything—well founded or not—that will hurt the feelings of his foe. Mr. OSBORNE was more successful in lightening the debate. He somewhat surprised his friends by the moderation of his opinions, since he did not wish the total disendowment of the Irish Church; but his statistics of the over-manning of the Establishment were comically effective, especially when in recounting the hierarchy and the clergy of his own diocese, he began by saying, "A bishop is kept for *me*." His quotation from "Richard III," describing the hesitating Lord STANLEY of that day, was singularly apt. The last night of the debate was opened by Mr. COLERIDGE, in a speech of remarkable clearness and power, beautifully delivered, full of argument and point. In one passage he said, with great effect, after a brief reference to past outrages in Ireland, "We do not like to hear these things talked about now; we are absolutely ashamed of them; but the institution which was their principal cause remains in Ireland still." He was followed by Lord MAYO, whose manner is not lively, and who does not relieve his oratory either



by epigram or retort, but who certainly made the very best speech on his side that was made during the debate—the only address, indeed, that supplies anything like pleas in mitigation of the extreme sentence of the law on the Irish Church; for the address of Mr. HARDY, Mr. HENLEY, and General PEEL were defences of all State Churches rather than of the Irish Establishment. Mr. DISRAELI's speech was in some respects his best, and in some respects his worst. It was badly connected and too audacious in its paradox; but his biting retorts on Lord CRANBORNE and Mr. LOWE were full of his old fire, and there were touches of his fierce word-combat style in it that on the hustings might have some effect. Lord CRANBORNE is supposed to be the *Quarterly* reviewer who has more than once attacked Mr. DISRAELI; and in applying to the noble lord the parenthesis,—“I do not know whether he wrote the articles while I was his colleague,” the Prime Minister conveyed a keen insinuation that few men could hear without wincing. The cool, easy tone of his reply was also kept up in his declaration that Lord CRANBORNE's invective “wanted finish,” and that his “only” objection to it was that “the bark” on one side produced from the other such “a chorus of reciprocal malignity.” Mr. LOWE emerging, “not from his cave, but from a more cynical habitation,” and “wailing his monotonous melody to the moon,” is a picture in Mr. DISRAELI's earlier and effective style. The truth is that no man in the House gets the better of the present Premier in personal encounter. He is not sensitive—others are; and it is rather an advantage to him when he diverts the House from that consideration of principles of legislation and statesmanlike policy in which, as the leader of a minority, he cannot have any party strength. The best way of meeting Mr. DISRAELI is as Mr. GLADSTONE did on Friday night, merely to note his assertions and leave them to answer themselves. Nor can the Liberals regret that in their leader's two speeches—that which opened and that which closed the debate—they had nothing but the grave expostulation and calm argumentation which so well become an earnest Statesman undertaking a great task.

The stagnant waters of political corruption have at length been thoroughly stirred, and new blossoms of progressive promise begin to appear on the political hedges of the Nation. I am delighted to observe that the Liberals in the House of the Common men have at last recovered their patriotic spirits, and that their noble leader is just where he ought to be, at the head of a great and united majority. Mr. GLADSTONE, certainly, has not made a factious move, for the Ministry have not resigned, and, therefore, they do not regard it in that light. The House of the Common men has affirmed a principle with regard to the Anglican Church in Ireland, and that is all, just as last year it affirmed a principle with regard to Parliamentary Reform. The most significant and important fact, however, for the Ministry to deal with is, that they have now to meet a united Opposition, and that it is not possible to carry on the business of the Nation with a minority. Greater Ministers than Mr. DISRAELI have tried to do so and failed, and certainly Sir ROBERT PEEL, if not the Earl of DERBY, would have resigned, and handed over the affairs of the Government to the party opposite. Mr. DISRAELI is, of course, the best judge of the honor of his party, and it is not for us to complain if he lays down a new theory of party ethics, for such a theory can only serve the Liberals when their time comes. It is a matter for cordial



congratulation to both sides that politicians have at last taken up determined positions. There is no mistake as to the temper of either side; both sides are thoroughly in earnest. They not only mean every word they say, but Mr. GLADSTONE and Mr. DISRAELI know that the men who sit behind them mean every word they cheer. If the one leader or the other had to arrange a scheme, no matter how clever, the Tories would not learn their lesson, nor would the Liberals hesitate to follow another leader. The diffusion of knowledge is doing its work well. The greatest gain to the Nation is, that the sham liberality and spurious political morality of 1867 has been nearly extinguished. Leading men in the House of Commons know that they are now the representatives of electors who desire the House to act and not merely to talk, for of talk, of Resolutions even, we have had enough during the last ten years, if not more. For once the House has shown some pluck; it is a good beginning, and the same spirit of activity in thought, the same determination to resolve, carried into action, would soon alter the character of our legislation, and make legislation, what it is not now, an element of progressive improvement. We have got at last a House of Commons which is a House in earnest, for it recognizes the implacable spirit of the people for progress. Once more the Constitution is in working order, because two great parties are fairly in competition for the honors of the State, and the responsibilities of administration. They do not disguise their plan of action,—aggression and resistance to change,—and it ought always to be so, for, when a sickly spirit of compromise comes over either party, Ministers descend to the level of clerks, and the House of Commons is degraded to the position of a vestry, great in details, infinitesimal in principle. The House, at last, has got out of the narrow ruts dug by half-minded men, and the contest even in the moribund Parliament is fixed to take effect without even a thought of the moribund constituencies. It is curious, however, to notice how little men in the upper classes have comprehended the tremendous change which has taken place during the last fourteen months, for they come before the people to patter about the old cries, just as if the people will not ask for something more than old cries that have served popularity-hunters in the Liberal ranks so long. The Candidates who come before popular constituencies must have something now to say, for it is a mere matter of course about the redistribution of seats, the ballot, the opening of the University Fellowships, free trade, and non-intervention. What we ought to have now is a clear programme as to taxation, imperial and local, its redistribution over realized property and industry, for industry now pays all; a clear proposal as to dwellings for the poor, so that they may neither be overcrowded nor overcharged; also upon National Education, not to be paid by rates upon industry, but by a resumption of endowments intended for the poor, which are enough and to spare for the purpose. We shall get fast enough to great party issues, but questions like these can be dealt with by men in the spirit of patriots, and the sooner Liberals begin to think of the social programme that must soon follow the Reform Act and the Irish Church Resolutions the better. We are yet a long way off a great result to the people at large, but industry, integrity, and civil courage, such as you have always manifested, will carry us forward very fast, in ameliorating the condition of the Nation.

It is impossible to regard the Irish Church question as subordinate



to any other now before the country. It is, in fact, the great cardinal question of the day, and the Parliamentary Government will be disgraced if it allows a Cabinet, hopelessly wrong on such a matter, to retain power one moment longer than public convenience demands. Who should replace them if they are compelled to resign? If Mr. DISRAELI shall be compelled to walk out, who shall walk in? If the Resolutions are carried, a Bill will have to be passed through both Houses, and the House of Lords may reject it. I have observed that the House of Lords has been rather ominously silent on the subject. Will the legislation of the Commons be defeated in the Upper House? It is needful in the meantime that Mr. GLADSTONE, with your and Mr. MILL's assistance, should hold in his hand his great majority; for the Peers, who would respect so large a force, might act with supreme indifference to a small one. To superficial observers, the rapidity with which the House of Commons has been persuaded to change its tactics on the Irish Church matters, appears strange and startling, but the influence of the Liberal Press,—*of special publications in particular*,—for a considerable time back, had prepared it for the change. Mr. DISRAELI is palpably playing false, and the Tories see it, and wince under a leadership which they despise, but do not know how to throw off. Under such circumstances there must be a serious split before long. Mr. GLADSTONE may not yet see his way to follow yourself and Mr. MILL upon the Irish land question, but he ought to abstain from joining any Government pledged to go wrong or to restrict him on this subject. The Tory hatred of Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. MILL, and yourself, is naturally provoked by your combined ability and zeal as Reformers. You have all outgrown the shilly-shally of common-place politicians, and that is an unpardonable offence with those who have not the same faculty of progress. Some are jealous of your commanding talents, and more dislike your noble disposition to deal earnestly with public life. The Irish Church question now stands first in the order of settlement. Further debates during the present Session can only prepare the way for measures which the next Parliament must consider and approve. It is to be hoped that the late division, in which the influence of public opinion upon the Liberal party is plainly recognized, will have the effect of reconsolidating the Liberal party. The objections that have been made to Mr. GLADSTONE, and the desire to thwart him, will drop to the ground in proportion as the people show their determination not to be trifled with. The Irish Church business has passed the debatable stage. The people at large know its real nature. They have considered it long enough, and feel that the time for action has arrived. The House of Commons now understands this state of the public mind and submits to its decision. Disestablishment and Disendowment in Ireland may become a precedent for disestablishment and disendowment in England and Scotland. Public opinion would seem to be favorable to the disestablishment of the Church in Ireland; and the great Parliamentary majority is a pledge that Justice shall soon be done. A great wrong is to be righted, and a source of National weakness and disunion is to be stopped up. The disestablishment and disendowment of the Church in Ireland must be recommended as one of the principal means of removing a perpetual source of discontent and reconciling the Irish Roman Catholics to the connexion of the two countries. The existence of a State Church in opposition to the moral convictions of a vast majority of the Irish people is a



grievance which every impartial observer admits, and it is from this conviction in the minds of the Protestant people that Mr. GLADSTONE derived the strength so apparent in the recent division. English and Scottish Protestants have no wish to be unjust to Irish Roman Catholics. Prepared to rejoice in your inevitable elevation to office, and delighted with your continued appearance as Mr. GLADSTONE's principal colleague,

I am, dear Sir, your sincere admirer and fellow-laborer in the cause of human improvement,

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER XIV.

59, VICTORIA TERRACE, BELFAST,  
April 6th, 1868.

THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE.

DEAR SIR,—Considering that you were reared in the very hotbed of religious bigotry, that you were introduced to public life under the auspices of the most inveterate political re-actionists, and that your most intimate friends are Tories of the deepest dye, or aristocrats of the most exclusive caste, your liberality, though very far from being as advanced as the requirements of the age and country, is, at the same-time, really marvelous, and such as to prove, beyond the possibility of cavil, that your Intellectual Faculties and Moral Sentiments are of a very high and healthy order, and that your sympathies beat in unison with the sympathies of your most intelligent fellow-countrymen in their aspirations for a higher and a nobler social and political condition of things than that existing in Britain at the present moment. If your mental constitution had been of the small contracted order of the GATHORNE HARDY stamp, you would to the end of your physical life, have continued the sectarian bigot and the political re-actionist which you were at the beginning of your career. But having an eye which could see the signs of the times, a mind which could learn from the teachings of experience, and moral sentiments which could sympathize with the sufferings of the oppressed and impoverished millions,—your comprehending and understanding powers gradually grew, until at length they burst almost every one of the intellectual fetters with which your benign *Alma Mater* had thought to stunt your mental stature down to the orthodox and safe dimensions of genteel mediocrity. You happily had the good sense to learn, shortly after your entrance into public life, that all the wisdom in the universe was not monopolized by the austere sectaries and pompous pedants who had been the guides and instructors of your youth. You found out that there was a vast ocean of true ideas outside the snug, priestly, and lordly fishpond which you had been taught to regard as the reservoir of all human knowledge. You read the history of your country, and you made the startling discovery that, if British Statesmanship had been guided by the teachings of the two great English Universities, the British people of the present day would have no more religious, political, or intellectual freedom than the Spaniards under Queen ISABELLA, the Austrians under FRANCIS JOSEPH, or the Neapolitans under King BOMBA. You were, I am certain, astounded, and doubtless disgusted, to find that Oxford and Cambridge Universities, in their corporate capacities, had always taught



that Kings were to be passively and meekly obeyed under all circumstances, no matter how revolting to humanity their commands might be; that the people, however grievously oppressed, had no right to rebel against their anointed monarch, and that if they did rebel, they deserved to be hanged and quartered in this world, and were certain to be everlastingly damned in the next; that heretics, if they refused to become members of the State Church, ought to be burnt, or beheaded, or hanged, or otherwise sent out of the way; that free speaking or writing ought not to be permitted; that religious dissenters ought not to be tolerated; that unless education were to be under the absolute control of the priest, it were better that the people should continue in ignorance; that the working classes had no right to political power; and that the Monarchs, the artificial Nobles, and the Soil-Lords of Britain had a perfect right to pass and maintain Corn Laws for keeping up the rents of the Land-Lords, and for keeping the people always on the verge of starvation. These, and such as these, were the political doctrines of the great Universities in Britain; and if the Legislation and Government of the Nation are not now based and shaped upon such teachings, it is because the poor, downtrodden, and hard-working people of these realms have been indefinitely wiser in all political and religious matters than their hereditary rulers or their reverend and learned instructors. But, as I have already said, your great mind has triumphed over the bigotry of your early instructors, and you are at this moment the head of the Liberal Party in Parliament, and one of the most advanced political thinkers of the day. Your recent speeches to your constituents clearly prove this. But they prove more than this. They also prove that you are one of the most honest and courageous of our public men. In the midst of a shameful public panic, when Statesmen and public journalists were advocating the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in England and Scotland, when the whole Irish people were charged with murderous proclivities, and when the slightest word against the Irish State Church, Irish Absenteeism, or Irish Soil-Lord wholesale evictions or extermination of the people, is construed into a treasonable offence, and into a sympathy with murderers and assassins, you were bold and brave enough to proclaim that the Irish people had grievous wrongs to complain of, and that British Statesmen ought not to delay setting about the redress of these wrongs, because of the recent Fenian outrages. Now, I repeat that, however backward you may be on such points as University and Church Reform in England,—though you are not up to the mark on the Ballot, or even on the Church-rate question,—though you are in favor of increasing the number of bishops, and cherish a strong dislike, almost amounting to a horror, of Dr. COLENSO's fearless handling of the so-called five books of Moses,—though you still believe in Sir ROBERT PEEL's ridiculous and mischievous currency system,—you are, for all this, one of the most honest, courageous, and advanced of British Statesmen. Therefore, the genuine Liberals of the British Empire must look to you as their leader in the House of the Common men. You are unquestionably honest and earnest, but you want backing-up by the people. You are incessantly exposed to social influences of the most deleterious kind. All that aristocratic wealth and favor, and refinement of manners can do to win you from the service of political progress, and enlist you once more on the side of religious intolerance and political iniquity, are now being done. Therefore, the people must support you in your new resolve



to disestablish the Irish Protestant State Church,—to put all the religious sects in Ireland upon an equal footing, and to convince the Irish people that they are no longer regarded as an alien or conquered race by the Statesmen or people of England and Scotland. Another cause why you should be unanimously supported by the people is, that there is still a probability that unless the Liberals grapple manfully and victoriously with this Irish question, Mr. DISRAELI, when he has “educated” his “stupid party” up to the mark, will take it in hand and settle it in a manner unsatisfactory to the great body of the people. Mr. DISRAELI, in his speech, purposely dropped a phrase which paves the way to a future apostacy. “I am not,” he said, “prepared to believe that the Irish Church will always remain in its present position.” In other words, he is prepared, when the first opportunity presents itself, to deal with the Irish Church as he has dealt with the Reform question,—make its disestablishment a Tory measure, and thus take the wind out of your sails, and ensure for himself and his party another spell of office. But the question is one for the people, rather than for any of the Leaders of the rival political factions ; and unless the working classes of England and Scotland make up their minds to cease paying for the Government of Ireland in the interests of the Irish Soil-Lords, nothing that either yourself or Mr. DISRAELI will do can materially benefit the Irish people, or remove from Britain a reproach as black as any that ever stained the character of a Christian Nation.

The Tories and their journals do not think that the Established Protestant Church,—the Church of the principal Soil-Lords and of about half-a-million of people, forced upon five millions of Roman Catholics,—is a grievance at all ; or if it be, that it is one worth making any fuss about. But, to illustrate the character of this grievance, let me suppose, however, that the people of England and Scotland had been subjected to a similar grievance. Let me suppose (and the supposition is certainly not beyond the possibilities of national destiny) that France, or say a confederacy of the Catholic Nations of Europe, had conquered Britain, and forced the Roman Catholic Creed at the point of the sword upon the Protestant people of England and Scotland. Let me suppose, further, that English and Scottish Protestants,—as we are all satisfied would be the case,—were to make a determined stand against such execrable tyranny, and convince their oppressors that they were resolved to shed the last drop in their veins rather than abandon the faith of their fathers and mothers for the sake of that which they believed to be a false and idolatrous religion. I may yet further suppose our possible Roman Catholic conquerors taking a cold-blooded politician’s view of the situation, and saying to the down-trodden and desperate Protestants,—“Well, never mind for the present. We are not very anxious that you should become Catholics. Indeed, so long as you obey our purely secular laws, and pay whatever taxes we may think proper to impose on you, we will not be particular about your religion. If, therefore, you will only consent to pay our bishops and priests the salaries which we intend to allot them, you may profess any form of worship you like best, and support or starve your own religious instructors as you best can.” Now, for the sake of argument, let me still further suppose that the Protestants of England and Scotland, enfeebled and exhausted by their long and heroic struggle in defence of their liberties, were to agree to this compromise,—Would it, therefore, follow that neither



they nor their children would have the right at any future time to abolish an Establishment to which they did not belong, which they believed to be false in its teachings, and which they knew to be tyrannical in its sympathies, cruel, rapacious, and remorseless in the enforcement of its temporal rights? The Protestants, when they were weak and helpless, or incapable of effectual resistance, submitted to the Establishment of a Church which they detested, both on account of its theological dogmas and its political associations and influences. Therefore, according to the Logic of the Tories and their journals, the Protestants, however strong in numbers, resources, and organization, have no right to quarrel with the iniquitous arrangement, to which, in the day of their weakness and humiliation, their forefathers had submitted. Carried to its legitimate issues, the teachings of the Tories, and of the ruling class organs, amounts to this. If one generation submits to a wrong, all succeeding generations are bound to yield a similar submission; once a political slave, always a political slave; Royal tyranny, aristocratic scoundrelism, social and political crime, if once they have received the sanction of law, ought to be allowed to exist throughout all duration. The reply to such monstrous fallacies will be found in the ordinary intelligence of every honest man. For myself, I rejoice to believe that on this Irish question the Tories and their organs do not represent the opinions and convictions of the people of England and Scotland. If they did, I should despair not only of the present, but of the future of our Nation; for a Nation imbued with sentiments so idiotic, and, at the same time, so fiendish, would be a standing universal nuisance and peril, which all that is estimable in humanity would be interested in abating or removing from the world, encumbered and polluted by its pestiferous existence. On this great and vital Irish question, Mr. BRIGHT and not Mr. DISRAELI, represents the public opinion of England and Scotland. In his admirable speech delivered recently at Rochdale, the Member for Birmingham gave expression to the following truly wise and thoroughly patriotic thoughts:—"The great preserver of peace in Ireland has been the gallows and the gibbet. Of late years the barbarity of the law has but rarely exhibited itself; but in former years the number of persons who suffered death by the law in Ireland was something wonderful, and appalling to think of. Now, twenty years ago, many of you will recollect that in Ireland, under the guidance of one of Ireland's greatest sons, the late Mr. O'CONNELL, there were held meetings of vast numbers of the people, equal probably in number to the meetings that were held a year ago in Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow, and London. Those meetings were held to condemn certain things that were evil in Ireland; to demand remedies; to complain even that there should be a legislative union between the two countries, for they thought that only an Irish Parliament could abolish the miseries of Ireland. But there is not one of you that can point to any single or great measure of Justice which was given to Ireland in consequence of those great meetings. They were on the other side of the Channel. They did not frighten Lord DERBY like the meetings of last year. They were not so near home, and the Government in London always knew that they could count upon the power of Great Britain to prevent any great mischief being done across the Channel. The grievances were not remedied, the demands of the people were not conceded. Nothing had been done in Ireland except under the in-



fluence of terror." It is painful, and even frightful, to think that the terrors of atrocities may be more potent to compel the attention of our hereditary rulers to Irish grievances than the most forcible and cogent arguments, when nothing more terrible than moral suasion is employed to press them home. Such, however, I fear is the case. The political intelligence of the people has, however, to some extent, penetrated the thick incrustations of barbarous prejudices and sordid considerations that protect the brains of our hereditary masters from the civilizing ideas of the age. Aristocratic ignorance has been slightly leavened with popular intelligence. British rulers are being gradually converted to Political Science, and the leaders of a Christian Nation are no longer open to the charge of being altogether ignorant of, or hostile to, some of the plainest and most imperative requirements of the Christian religion. The knowledge of this most gratifying fact, I obtained from the Irish debate,—the only compensation for the loss of time which it caused,—the enormous outpouring of aristocratic twaddle, prejudice, and bigotry which marked its course. The most remarkable and gratifying result of this Parliamentary display is your clear conversion to the view, respecting the Irish State Church, held and avowed by every intelligent honest man who had ever studied the question. In your able speech on Monday night (March 16) you emphatically declared that you were for "disestablishing" the Irish Protestant Church,—that this Church existed in Ireland as the "last symbol of conquest where it is regarded as a public scandal." "That Church," you went on to say, "must cease to exist." This sentiment you repeated over and over again, in slightly varied phraseology and with ever-increasing emphasis, till the end of your long and memorable speech. Mr. DISRAELI's reply was one of the cleverest, and at the same time most contemptible, retorts that ever issued from the lips of that glittering charlatan. As a mere verbal or jocular rejoinder, it is entitled to the highest praise. It provoked laughter from both sides of the House, and affords conclusive proof that Mr. DISRAELI as Prime Minister can be as flippant, sarcastic, and unscrupulous, as Mr. DISRAELI the friendless and universally condemned adventurer. But looked at as the manifesto of the first official Statesman of the greatest Empire in the world, respecting one of the most momentous tasks that ever tried the capacity of a Government, it may be safely affirmed that a more contemptible speech was never uttered in the House of the Common men. The Prime Minister's treatment of the Irish question is analagous to that of a physician jesting and dancing at the bed-side of a tortured and apparently dying patient. The frightful condition of the Irish people, he treated as a huge practical joke "got up" by yourself and the Liberal Party for the annoyance of the Tory Cabinet. He virtually denied that there is anything in the present state of Ireland calling for special legislation; and the paltry offers of a "Catholic University," an inquiry into the "Land question," and the "Irish Railways," he referred to as concessions to the clamorous demands of unprincipled factions, rather than as remedial measures required to arrest the final dissolution of a rapidly decaying Nation. That the Prime Minister of the British Empire should treat the condition of Ireland question as a capital joke,—as a broad target set up for the reception of his epigrammatic shafts,—was such an outrage on propriety, that even foreign journalists, not remarkable for solemnity of manner or seriousness of disposition, cried "shame upon the spectacle"! Even the French journal-



ists, who are as much inclined to badinage as any in the world, were amazed to find the Prime Minister of the British Empire treating the Irish question as if it were a capital joke, and a British House of Common men thrown into convulsions of laughter at the fun extracted from the complaints and miseries of five millions of people. In short, according to the Prime Minister, Ireland wants nothing but to be "let alone." In this blessed Isle of the West" everything is "all serene," if only the Liberals would be quiet, and the few foreign emissaries of sedition, called Fenians, were all "bagged" and disposed of by the Lord Lieutenant and his subordinates. Still, out of their overflowing goodness of intentions, the Queen's Ministers were prepared to found and endow another "Sectarian University," to inquire into the "Land question, and if Parliament will let them have the money, to buy up the "Irish Railways,"—if only the Liberal party will let Mr. DISRAELI enjoy the honors and rewards of office. And this, judging from his speech, is all that Mr. DISRAELI and his party are prepared to do for the solution of the Irish problem. They will not patiently listen to any proposal which has for its object the disestablishment of the Irish Protestant Church. That last symbol of the conquest and political slavery of a noble race, Mr. DISRAELI, in his new *role* of Premier, regards with profound veneration. True, when a mere member of Parliament, he spoke of that ecclesiastical establishment as an "alien Church," as a reproach to British Statesmanship, and a perennial fountain of Irish disaffection. That, however, was when he sat below the gangway, when he was privileged to indulge a heedless rhetoric, and he had an object in alarming the stupid squires and vapid peers, whose sordid fears and disgusting prejudices have formed the ladder by which he has climbed to the highest office which a British citizen can occupy. Now, however, that Mr. DISRAELI, through his own unscrupulous adroitness, and the dearth of aristocratic brains, is Prime Minister of the British Empire, he professes to look upon the Irish State Church as a sacred institution, which it would be a heinous crime and a great blunder to disestablish. The fact is, that for the present the Tories are not disposed to be led or driven any further in that path of Liberalism in which, during the last two years, that accomplished bullock driver has kept them moving. The Tories will sacrifice a good deal in the shape of professed principles and traditional party policy for the pleasure of handling seventy millions annually of the people's money, and the proud position of governing an Empire on which the Sun never sets. But though prepared to give much, they will not give everything. There is a price which they will not just now pay for office. They draw the line of concession at the Irish State Church. Rather than touch with a hostile hand this famous Tory nursery of religious hatred, social bitterness, and political danger, they will retire to the cold shades of the Opposition, and see their rivals installed in the fat and pleasant offices of Downing Street. Mr. DISRAELI knows this, and this accounts for his flippant and insolent reply to you on Monday night, March 16. This speech was the Prime Minister's offering to the mighty power which has raised him to his exalted position. It was a concession to aristocratic interests, not the expression of Mr. DISRAELI's conviction. Such as it is, however, for the present it binds him to a do-nothing, if not to a re-actionary policy. Neither Ireland, nor England, nor Scotland has, for some time to come at least, anything further in the shape of very important Liberal legis-



lation to expect from Mr. DISRAELI and his herd of small-brained followers. But it is comfortable to remember that the real initiative to Liberal Legislation is now given out-of-doors, on the platform or through the Press. No great Political Reform of recent times has been commenced in the House of the Common men. Newspaper writers and political agitators stir the great national questions that after a time knock at the door of the people's House, and which are subsequently taken up by some courageous earnest working member, or by the leading Minister of the day.

Although as far as immediate beneficial legislative results are concerned, the great Irish debate may be said to have terminated nearly in smoke, yet the wordy darkness was slightly illumed by fitful gleams of light, which redeem British Statesmanship from that charge of utter mental blindness and groping in the dark, to which, on most great political questions it is justly open. The sound and fury of the combatants did really signify *something*. The pillar of cloud had a fiery, and even a radiant, side to it. When I waded through the recent Irish debate in the House of the Common men, I can see very little of a hopeful or of an encouraging nature therein. The majority of the Statesmen and speakers that have addressed themselves to the public know well enough the principal remedies for Irish distress and discontent, but her MAJESTY's Government have as yet offered nothing but dreary statistics, and scarcely so much as a distinct "promise to pay." In the opinion of the civilized world, in the mouths of all just and enlightened men, abroad as well as at home, Britain stands arraigned for not having done nearly enough to be "in the right" as regards the unhappy country whose sighs break the peace of Europe. In the course of a very few sentences you gave promise of an earnest speech, which you went on to keep with every word. The House was now roused thoroughly from lethargy; it rang with excitement and assent when you scourged the small theory of the Irish Secretary. The cheers redoubled when you approached the main topic of the debate, and repudiated the idea that the Church of England would be endangered if justice would be applied to the Church in Ireland. The Church in England you said, must not trust to outworks in countries where the presence of those outworks is a tyranny; it must trust to its own merits and virtues, and live where it has a right to live by its manifest vitality. Repudiating with scorn the proposition of issuing a Commission to see what is wrong about the Irish Church, when what is wrong is simply that it exists at all as a Government Corporation, you declared in earnest tones that "*The Irish State Church must cease to exist.*" A burst of energetic cheering broke forth, and rang the knell of the last great badge of conquest and ascendancy in Ireland, of which these few words will be recorded as the sentence. The debate was instantly relieved from its character of sterile eloquence by the clear and certain manifestation of a Liberal policy; and while you demanded "religious equality," you explained what you meant by it. You meant by disestablishment the putting a legal end to the existence of the State Church in Ireland; and at this renewed definition the aspect of the Protestant squires was most touching to watch. They listened like prisoners at a condemned sermon. Nevertheless, cheers with a new and "fighting" ring resounded when you said that, unless the Premier, as he sometimes did, expanded the useless programme of his Irish Secretary, it would be the stern duty and necessary course of the



Opposition to propose and carry into action, if obliged, a comprehensive scheme to do absolute justice,—in deeds, not in words,—to wronged Ireland; for “when the case is ripe, and when the hour is come, justice delayed is justice denied.”

It is really no exaggeration to say that, a century since, a Roman Catholic was born a political and social serf. It has taken nearly one hundred years to persuade the English and Scotch people that the majority of the Irish Nation were not born for personal, social, or political subjugation. It has taken nearly one hundred years to strike off, link by link, the old chains. When the oppressed millions made any new protest against some remnant of the “system of restraint,” English and Scotch Protestants haughtily asked, “Will this people never be content?” “Are we to grant them concession upon concession?” And then another fetter was sulkily removed. The late Mr. O’CONNELL lived to see Catholic Emancipation and Municipal Reform granted, though his crusade against tithes signally failed; and the compromise of 1838, as he predicted, gave a new lease of life to the old injustice. But the spirit which he roused did not slumber in his grave. The grand popular agitation that preceded 1829, and survived Emancipation, did more than merely thunder at the gates of Parliament for the admission of Roman Catholics: it roused the sense of Justice of English and Scotch Statesmen to the iniquity of the Irish Church; and you will be merely the executor of an old Whig will. If we take up the political debates from 1829 to 1838, we shall find that denunciation of the Irish Church had become a vigorous commonplace of English Liberalism, and a debate in 1835 or 1836 might almost be reprinted in 1868 as germane to the topics of our own time. That Emancipation was a blessing to Ireland we now see more clearly than ever; but the boon was somewhat marred by the manner of granting it. When PEELE carried the Repeal of the Corn Laws he won the affections of the people by his most generous ascription of merit to the “unadorned eloquence” of RICHARD COBDEN. But when he had assented to Emancipation there had been no such reconciliation between the Irish COBDEN and his antagonist. And the Tories, although they sullenly admitted the eligibility of Catholics for Parliament and for high offices, had but an imperfect idea of willingly investing them with official power. Above all, their hatred of O’CONNELL was still unquenched. They had learned their lesson, but they hated the teacher. The result was proportionately mischievous. A measure that might have been hailed as a boon was only the signal for renewed political agitation and agrarian strife. When Lord MULGRAVE came to Ireland a few years afterwards, he tried to make Catholic Emancipation a fact by calling Roman Catholics to posts of dignity and power; but his action served only to evoke an Orange howl, cordially re-echoed by the Tories. The Whigs were driven from power, and then commenced a renewed agitation of the most embarrassing kind—checked in 1844 by O’CONNELL’s imprisonment, but revived in a more dangerous form by Young Ireland in 1848; checked again, to re-appear once more in secret societies, in wicked agrarian outrages, and wild agrarian demands. The Emancipation Act of 1829 might have been made a final Act for the establishment of religious equality; but Toryism then had neither the courage to resist, nor the Statesmanship to be generous in its grants. What has been lost in completing the pacific conquest? Nearly forty years only! Something more. During that time there



have been scattered in Ireland the germs of sedition and secret political intrigue. But forty years of Irish discontent and forty years of English indifference have wrought their practical results in the rise of a spirit entirely opposed to that which O'CONNELL taught; until at last we have seen even law-respecting Irishmen who have thanked the Fenians for arousing Britain to the study of Irish wrongs. We now see how a change of mind has come over the British people, who, after reams of remonstrance, argumentation, and satire, are at length ashamed of the furious bigotry which enabled Exeter Hall to delay the real triumph of O'CONNELL and Emancipation.

A huge iniquity defended by imbecility, and ecclesiastical imposture, apologized and fought for by an organized hypocrisy,—such is the description which, with the strictest conformity to Truth and Justice, I must give of the Irish State Church, and the arguments advanced in its defence by the Tory Ministers and their adherents in the House of the Common men. Anything more lame and impotent than the speeches made in vindication, in the course of the recent debate, of the colossal vampire of an adulterated Christianity, which for the last three centuries has pressed upon the brain, and sucked the life-blood of the Irish people, is not to be found in the records of rhetorical conflicts. To the numerous facts and arguments adduced by yourself, Mr. BRIGHT, and the rest of the Liberals, for the abolition of the Irish State Church, neither Lord STANLEY, nor Mr. GATHORNE HARDY, nor any of their party, brought forward a single fact or consideration worthy of the slightest notice. As for the so-called facts on which the apologists of this hideous and condemned institution relied, they are no more than phantoms; and as for their arguments and sophisms, they have been examined and exploded a thousand times before. The only arguments worthy of any respect in favor of the continued existence of the alien Church in Ireland, brought forward by the friends of that legalized impiety, were the fifth article of the Act of Union between Ireland and England, and a clause in the Coronation Oath taken by the Queen and all the previous Sovereigns of the House of Hanover. In the fifth article of the Act of Union, it is distinctly laid down that the Irish Protestant Church shall be maintained in connexion with the State. Of this there can be no doubt; and the votaries of the alien Church are entitled to all the advantage which can be logically extracted from that document. But, unfortunately for them, every article of the Act of Union has been coolly and remorselessly violated when it suited the purpose or the interest of the Irish Tories to do so. And it is not until it is proposed to break through one of the articles of this infamous Act of Union, in the interest of the oppressed Irish people, and for the production of concord and good feeling between Ireland and England, that the Tory votaries of the religious imposture cry out against the infraction of the Act of Union. When the object is to aggrandize absentee Land-Lords, the Act of Union may be violated without a single protest against the infraction in the House of the Common men; but when the object is to conciliate the estranged affections of the people of Ireland, and remove from the Empire of the British Isles a source of bitter hatred and rankling animosity between millions of men who otherwise would respect and love each other, then the frantic howl is raised. Then the Act of Union is invoked, and the Irish Church is referred to as the Ark of the Almighty's covenant, which must not so much as be even touched by



the profane hands of unconsecrated laymen. Then, as to the clause of the Queen's Coronation Oath, there can be no doubt that in subscribing to that part of the Oath, our worthy sister the Queen swore, by everything that is deemed sacred, to defend the archbishops, bishops, parsons, and State paid Protestants of Ireland, in the possession of the lands, glebes, churches, cathedrals, and other emoluments of the alien Church. All this must be conceded. But what then? Does it follow, because, in conformity with a barbarous and silly custom, the British Queen is made to swear not to do, or consent to do, an act of obvious Justice, therefore, it must not be done? Because the King or Queen is compelled to promise to do an absurd or impossible thing, must, therefore, the thing be done? I will take a parallel case. Let me suppose that the owner of a large forest, when he comes into possession, finds that forest to be the home of a gang of rapacious and blood-thirsty robbers. These brigands are well organized and powerful, and they get hold of the Land-Lord, and compel him to swear he will not only allow them to live in the forest, but defend and assist them in the exercise of their immemorial calling,—that of levying contributions on the industrious tenants and laborers round about. But by-and-by the long-suffering victims of prescriptive plunder become desperate; and emboldened by the co-operation of powerful allies, to rise up against the hereditary robbers, fight and defeat them, and are on the eve of extirpating the pestiferous vermin, when all on a sudden the hands of the victors are stayed by an appeal to the Oath of the Land-Lord. He swore to allow the robbers to plunder the peasants and farmers, therefore, the peasants and farmers are to be plundered and pauperized throughout all duration. Now, in view of such a contingency as this,—What line of action would ordinary intelligence commend to the justly exasperated, and all but victorious, peasants and farmers? Why, this, they would say to the Land-Lord, "*Your Oath is not binding upon us, who never took it; nor upon yourself, since you cannot keep it. And even if you had the power to perform the obligation which it imposes upon you, it is a wicked and diabolical Oath, and, therefore, there is less wrong in breaking than there is in observing it.*" Then, it does not follow that because a man may have sworn to defend and maintain a reeking cesspool that has been in the family for some generations, the people poisoned by its unwholesome emanations are to be perpetually precluded from drying or removing this fountain of disease whenever they have the power to do so. The fact of our worthy sister the Queen having sworn to defend the Irish Church does not prove that the Irish Church ought not to be abolished, but only that the Coronation Oath has at least one foolish and wicked clause in it. GEORGE the Third was constantly pleading his Oath against Catholic Emancipation, and he succeeded in preventing that measure of simple justice during his own lifetime. But QUEEN VICTORIA is not her own grandfather, and, therefore, she will not be guilty of the stupendous folly and wickedness of attempting to pervert the mere form of words which she was compelled to repeat at her Coronation, into an instrument of injustice to millions of the people forming the Nation. Besides, the Queen has not the power to prevent the abolition of the Irish State Church; and as those who only have the power have not taken the Oath, and are not disposed to defend the alien Church, I know no cause why speedy justice should not be done upon this notorious and condemned criminal.

But the most unmistakable sign of the approaching downfall of the



Irish State Church is to be found in the distracted and mutually damaging apologies made by the Tory Ministers on its behalf, or rather for the purpose of defeating your design. Lord STANLEY, in supporting his feeble and disingenuous amendment, did not venture to say that Parliament ought not to interfere with the endowments of the Irish State Church. On the contrary, he freely admitted that certain "modifications" were imperatively called for, and that the only plea for letting it alone just now, is the advanced state of the Session, the backward condition of the public legislation that has to be done, and the certainty of a general election within a few months. On these grounds he pleaded for delay, and deprecated the adoption of your Resolutions. Mr. GATHORNE HARDY, on the other hand, went in for a "No Surrender" policy. He,—narrow-minded, unteachable Tory that he is,—would maintain the Irish State Church at all hazards. He actually had the unsurpassed impudence to assert that this Church was a benefit to Ireland, and not in the slightest degree hurtful to the Roman Catholics, or any other class of people. Now, the best answer to such audacious mendacities as those of which the Home Secretary has made himself the father, is to be found in the incontrovertible, statistical, and historical facts of that Church. From these I learn that for a population not much, if any, larger than that of Liverpool or Glasgow, there are maintained, at the expense of a half-starving people, who do not believe in their doctrines or profit by their teachings, not less than twelve bishops, two archbishops, and several hundreds of deans, archdeacons, prebendaries, rectors, vicars, curates, &c., &c. I also find that a sum computed at the very least to amount to about three quarters of a million annually, the property of the people of Ireland, is devoted to the exclusive support of this Sectarian Establishment. Then, it is more than notorious that this is the Church of the excessively rich, maintained at the expense of the extremely poor,—the gorgeous Church of alien oppressors and absentee Land-Lords, maintained out of the half-rewarded industry of a poor, half-famished, and bitterly despised people. Is it not a palpable fact, that, nine out of every ten Irishmen cordially hate this Church as a vehicle of heresy and a symbol of political slavery? Therefore, this Church of the ungrateful Soil-Lords, the wealth-consuming sluggards, and the horse-leeches of Irish labor must and shall be speedily abolished, as the first direct step towards the discharge of that immense debt which England owes to Ireland for seven hundred years of unparalleled oppression. This is now the grand question of the hour. The voice of anxious millions proclaim,—Down with the Irish State Church! The Liberal Press repeats the proclamation,—Down with the ecclesiastical harlot, kept by the Irish Soil-Lords, but paid for and pampered by the Irish people! England now acknowledges that she owes an immense debt to Ireland, and as a first instalment, Parliament is called upon to make the Irish people a present of all the extorted and compulsory endowments of the Irish State Church, subject, of course, to adequate salaries for life to the present incumbents.

The speech in which you introduced the subject was admirably adapted to obtain for you the support of a united party in the House of the Common men, and the irresistible help of public opinion and public conviction beyond its walls. As ever, firm and conciliatory, you were found, I believe, to have decided many waverers, and to have given fresh courage to the timid, while, at the same time, abating both



the rancor and the terror of Opposition. The picture which you drew of what would remain to the Irish State Church after its disestablishment and disendowment, provided that the considerate plan in which you mainly concur with Mr. BRIGHT, should be adopted, was well adapted to reduce to the lowest point the bitter animosity of reluctant Churchmen. The able manner in which you treated the historical part of the subject made an evident impression upon the House. A few facts illustrative of the very recent formation of new parishes in which the Protestants are under ten, while the Catholics are over a thousand, demonstrated the justness no less than the expediency of your proposal, that operations productive of fresh vested interests should at once cease. In fine, after carefully feeling your way through all parts of the subject, and looking round upon the House, you felt yourself warranted, even before Lord STANLEY had opened his lips (what could you not have said had you spoken after?) in saying that before you had seen the amendment, you thought the thread of remaining life to the State Church in Ireland was short; but since you perused the notice, you regarded that thread as shorter still. To the verification of this political prophecy Mr. BRIGHT must be held to have made a most effective contribution. His great speech was truly weighty, and without a single syllable to detract from the pressure by sounding a single prejudice. His use of the argument from the influence desired at Rome, under the unequal government of Ireland, was at once forcible and forbearing. With excellent taste, he admonished those who took alarm for the Church in England, that they had far more to fear from feuds within than from foes without. It was so, he pointed out, as to the disruption in the Church of Scotland; which, however, as the late Lord ABERDEEN confessed to him, turned out, contrary to his fears, to be a great blessing for the country,—a blessing so great and so manifest that many persons thought the Residuary Church would one day solicit disestablishment. Instead of twitting the Ministerialists with being “under education,” he threw himself, a fellow-pupil, among them, saying, “We all have to learn;” at the same time giving you a fatherly pat as a docile and an apt scholar. Finally, he exhorted the whole House not to close either their ears against arguments based upon Justice, or their Sentiments against the dictates of Equity. Once only did the opposite benches for a moment mistrust him; but they soon discovered their mistake. “Pluck up,” he exclaimed, “this weed that pollutes the air.” In an instant the smooth locks of prejudice stood upon end. “Nay, more,” added the finished, because earnest, orator, without a pause, here is consolation for you in the sentence: “there will remain behind, rooted and nourished in the soil of devoted minds,—a free Protestant Church, which, disencumbered, shall become, perchance, the chief grace and lasting ornament of the Island.” The cessation of the Established Church Corporation in Ireland from existence, in the form of a State Establishment, is now a grand political necessity.

Your third Resolution is a fashionable form of homage to the dignity, if not to the rights, of the Crown. Much, if not the whole, of the power of the Crown is derived from the multitudes of rich appointments in its gift. Strip the Crown of the whole of its patronage, and it will be reduced to a state of well-nigh perfect political impotence. But the abolition of the Irish State Church will deprive the Crown of a very large and considerable portion of its patronage. Therefore,



seeing that the Resolutions contemplate so serious an infraction on the Royal influence, it is only a mere matter of courtesy "that an humble address should be presented to" (our worthy sister lady) "her Majesty, humbly to pray that, with a view to the purpose aforesaid,"—namely, the disestablishment of the Irish State Church,—“her Majesty will be graciously pleased to place at the disposal of Parliament her interest in the temporalities of the archbishoprics, bishoprics,” &c., of the Irish Church. Under our peculiar form of Government, a large amount of “constitutional” hypocrisy is brought into play whenever a just measure of Reform has to be passed, and the Crown is “humbly begged to grant” that which it is well known the Crown has no power to refuse. If, therefore, the House of the Common men should adopt your Resolutions, it is pretty safe to assume that the Queen will “place at the disposal of Parliament her interest in the temporalities” of the Irish State Church. But whether the present moribund and aristocratic members of the House of the Common men agree to your Statesman-like proposal or not, there can be no doubt that the doom of the Irish State Church is sealed. The sentence has gone forth that this pestilential abomination,—this flagrant outrage, in the name of Christianity, on the feelings and convictions of a profoundly religious people,—must cease to exist. Henceforward the foreign Soil-Lords of Ireland must pay their own priests. The poor rack-rented Irish tenants must not any longer be plundered for the support of a parcel of fat parsons, whose doctrines they disbelieve, whose language many of them do not understand, and whose interests are antagonistic to those of the ragged and half-starved peasantry on whose industry they grew fat, and insolent, and proud. The English and Scottish working classes will no longer lend themselves to the diabolical purposes of the Irish Soil-Lords. They will no longer send men to Ireland to bayonet the hard-working and robbed Irish peasants and mechanics into submission to a gang of obdurate sensualists, who spend on the pimps and prostitutes of foreign lands the gold wrung by legal pains and tortures from the toil of a noble, though half-famished, people. Indeed, the people of England and Scotland, have no interest in the existence of an alien State Church, or in the usurpations and robberies of absentee and tyrannical Soil-Lords in Ireland, therefore, they will decline to pay for the maintenance of these monstrous and disgusting iniquities. The tolerance of this gigantic abomination is one of the most astounding, and yet absurd, crimes that ever disgraced any Nation. What other Christian country has ever been guilty of the stupendous folly,—not to say iniquity,—of maintaining four bishops over a district where “each of the four has less than one in twenty of its population belonging to the Established Church?” This piece of statistics I glean from the census returns of 1861, and though bad and shameful enough, it is far from being the most flagrant sample of the huge stock of scandalous impieties which constitute the Irish State Church:—“The Bishop of Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert, and Kilmacduagh is returned as presiding over 4.71 per cent. of the population; the Bishop of Limerick, Ardfert, and Aghadoe, over 3.83 per cent. of the people; the Bishop of Cashel, Emly, Waterford, and Lismore, over 3.73 per cent. of the inhabitants; and the Bishop of Tuam, Killala, and Achonry, over 3.37 per cent. of the population.” From other reliable sources I also learn that there are scores of parishes in Ireland in which the only Protestants are the Protestant parson



and his family; and yet many of these sinecurists are in receipt of £400, £500, £600, and in some cases £1,000 a year; all of which comes out of the pockets of poor men, who look upon the Protestant parson as a heretical interloper, appointed and paid to apologize for and vindicate the crimes and cruelties of absentee and other alien Soil-Lords. No wonder, then, that the Irish people should be deeply disaffected, or that all who are just, noble, and enlightened in England and in Scotland should demand that this colossal iniquity of the Irish State Church should cease to disgrace our Nation, or cumber the beautiful Earth with its existence. Your view evidently is, that, considering the particular circumstances of Ireland, there ought not to be any preference or priority of religious communions. The disestablishment which you propose is absolute and total. The State shall ultimately cease to contribute, or to enforce and assist the levy of contributions for any denomination whatever. Not merely the endowments of the Establishment, but also the grants to the Roman Catholics and to the Presbyterians must cease altogether; subject, of course, to an ample and liberal provision for life interests, but not one farthing of money shall hereafter be raised or collected, under the authority of the State, for either Churchmen, Romanists, or Presbyterians.

Your forthcoming elevation to the Premiership over the heads of many Whig Peers will be in one sense remarkable, simply because the Liberal party, as a rule, have generally an ample supply of ambitious noblemen who are able and ready to take the first place. The Tories have been led by CANNING, PEEL, DISRAELI; while their Liberal opponents have been ruled by Lords—GREY, MELBOURNE, RUSSELL, PALMERSTON. Why is this? Why does the more popular side adopt the less popular plan? Why has a party usually opposed to excessively aristocratic privileges selected, as a rule, aristocratic leaders? It may be through personal incidents; or because Liberalism has in it some charm that stimulates to activity men who inherit high rank. Tory nobles submit to the leadership of a Plebeian with a consent which springs from the essence of their creed; they seem to say, "What matters it who saves us, so that we are effectually saved?" But when a Peer becomes a Liberal he so far surrenders any exceptional claim arising from his birth. He acts, to some extent, against the old traditions of his order; he associates, as a matter of course, with untitled public men; and his Radicalism—for there are Radical Peers—is the result of intellectual activity. There is, therefore, always a cluster of young artificial nobles contending with middle-class Liberals for high place; while the Tory party—indolent, sleepy, satisfied—is remarkable for its large employment of untitled and middle-class politicians. The two actual leaders of the new Toryism—Mr. DISRAELI and Lord CAIRNS—are notable for nothing but mental power; and it will be curious to trace the effect produced by their union on the tactics of the party. I do not think that they can possibly have recourse to more political artifices—not to say "dodges"—than the Tories in recent days; while it is possible that they will not find the bulk of the squires following them with such alacrity when they organize forlorn hopes against the Liberal citadel. On the Irish Church, Lord CAIRNS will speak, of course, with full knowledge and great authority; but he must strike out some grand new line if he would hope to retain for the already doomed Establishment even a portion of its advantages. It is pleasant to parties in my position to think that underneath the strong partisanship



which the Liberal and Tory leaders display to each other, a warmer feeling is to be found. It is impossible that you and Mr. DISRAELI can do other than admire each other. Men so great are far removed from littleness such as we find in the ranks of social and commercial life. Politically it is possible for men to hate each other, and yet to be ready with a very active sympathy when Nature breaks through the bonds of formalism and the etiquette of political life. So it has always been noticed that Mr. DISRAELI is never wearied of expressing unstinted admiration of Mr. BRIGHT, and that in the midst of his most fiery invectives the great orator of the platform can say a word in favor of the leader of the Tories. Were it not for these pleasant memorials of a better and more manly character in our intense political strife our constitutional system would break down, and one would be disgusted with the merely personal contests into which political life would degenerate. The British people love fair play, and proud as they are to see the intellectual giants pelt each other in good style, they are also not less pleased to hear that, when the strife is over, the men lately so bitterly engaged against each other can sit at the same table and exchange the courtesies of civilized life.

I am, Dear Sir, your faithful friend and co-operator in the Cause of Justice.

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER XV.

59, VICTORIA TERRACE, BELFAST,  
April 6th, 1868.

PROFESSOR H. FAWCETT, M.P.

DEAR SIR,—I did not, until within a few days ago, think that Britain or the world had sustained any serious loss by the retirement of the EARL OF DERBY from public life. Now, however, I am of a different opinion. Ever since the morning of Saturday, the 4th current, when the Prime Minister of Britain,—our new Defender of the Faith,—quietly pocketed the affront put upon him by an overwhelming majority of the House of the Common men, I have been convinced that Britain is so poor in honorable Statesmen that we cannot, without serious diminution of our moral prestige, part even with so poor a Statesman as the Earl of DERBY. Had that hot-brained artificial nobleman been Prime Minister when the adverse vote of the Commons showed that the public have not the slightest confidence in the Tory Government, foreign nations would have thought better of us than they now do. The EARL OF DERBY is too proud a man to stoop to a palpably mean and despicable course of conduct. Therefore, if he had found his Government defeated by a large majority on one of the most important questions that ever engaged the attention of Parliament, he would not have lost a moment of time in tendering his resignation. But Lord DERBY has resigned, and Mr. DISRAELI reigns in his stead. Now, this brilliant and extraordinary gentleman has the most profound contempt, not only for the country squires and noodle nobles whom he has subjected to his sway, but for the Nation whose political Chief he is. Probably he is not conscious that his own elevation to his present position is the strongest justification of his contempt for the British people that could be adduced. For of a verity there must be something wrong and weak



in the character of the people whose Prime Minister is a bitter-tongued man, who has given incisive expression to the fermenting venom that agitates the minds of the inarticulate squires and silly nobles, who would reduce Britain to the condition of Austria before the catastrophe of Sadowa, or of Naples before Garibaldi overthrew the Bourbon tyrant. Yes, Mr. DISRAELI despises both his own party and the Nation that permits that party to wield its power and manage its resources ; therefore, he disdains to comply with these requirements of political decency which no other Prime Minister that Britain ever had would have dared to disregard. He did not give the slightest hint of his intention to resign. He probably has not the least idea of doing so. He likes office ; he revels in the golden spoils of the Treasury. He has a vivid recollection of the cold and sterile shades of Opposition. He, the daring and successful adventurer, the offshoot of a despised race ; he, the political aspirant, who had neither wealth, nor family influence, nor Court favor to aid him in his upward struggle, enjoys the position which makes him the manufacturer of Christian Bishops and Peers of the realm, and the dispenser of hundreds of well-paid and little-to-do places. We may, therefore, rely upon it that nothing less than a formal vote of want of confidence, passed by a large majority, will induce Mr. DISRAELI to resign. There are some men who, when they find themselves comfortably lodged, even though they have no right to be in the house, must be either pushed, or kicked, or carried out before they leave the place. Mr. DISRAELI is one of those cool customers, and the Dukes, the Lords, the Barts., and the right honorable Gentlemen who serve under him, are evidently content to follow their leader through any tortuous or dirty path which he may think proper to pursue.

Here I may remark that the present Ministry is the most truly aristocratic that Britain has ever had since the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. There are serving under Mr. DISRAELI, no less than four Dukes,—namely, the Dukes of MONTROSE, MARLBOROUGH, RICHMOND, and BUCKINGHAM, and these artificial noblemen pocket their salaries regularly on quarter-day. Now, provided they do the work of the Nation, we do not grudge them their pay. The faithful servant, whether he be a member of Parliament or the head of a State department, is worthy of his hire. But there is no proof that these Dukes do any real work ; and it is most certain that beyond their high rank, sonorous titles, family influence, and vast wealth, they have no qualification whatever for the well-paid offices which they fill. But it is urged by the advocates of aristocratic ascendancy in political affairs, that the exalted rank and public character of these and other artificial noblemen is a guarantee that they will be no parties to any mean, or shabby, or glaringly immoral conduct in connexion with the Government. But there never was a greater mistake. We know that some of the dirtiest transactions that ever disgraced a party were perpetrated by artificial noblemen. We also know that some of the wealthiest Peers of the realm are addicted to meanness in monetary matters to which no high-spirited artizan with forty shillings a week would stoop. I am not, therefore, surprised to find that the ducal colleagues and subordinates of Mr. DISRAELI have not resigned, but have resolved to pocket the affront of last Saturday morning along with their salaries. Yes ; the Tory Dukes, as well as the artificial noblemen who compose the DISRAELI ministry are willing to remain members of a government condemned by an overwhelming



majority of the House of the Common men, and to pocket the money of a people who do not believe either in their political honesty or intellectual capacity. This being the case, it will be the bounden duty of the Liberal party, as soon as possible, to propose and carry a formal vote of want of confidence in the present Government; and then, in the highly probable event of Mr. DISRAELI and his ducal tail still resolving to disregard the sentence of the House by clinging to office, it may be necessary to summon a *national conference* for the purpose of considering what means, if any, "*Our great constitution*" has provided for getting rid of a Minister who despises the House of the Common men, and hurls defiance in the face of the people. In other words, supposing that Mr. DISRAELI, having subsidized and mesmerized the Dukes, should take it into his head to elect or constitute himself Prime Minister, or *perpetual Dictator* of Britain,—How can we get rid of his usurpation without resorting to physical force? The question is an important one, and I sincerely commend it through your great influence to the careful consideration of the very learned gentlemen who are constantly discovering some fresh beauty in our matchless constitution. "If the population have the power they may arrest the rulers, and bring them to the same judicial trial that would be reserved for the individual." This important principle, although frequently represented as seditious, is not only clearly acknowledged, as you are aware, but reduced to specific law in Magna Charta. The *principle* is acknowledged, although the application of it is restricted to twenty-five Barons; and a reservation is made in favor of the person of the King, Queen, and royal children. Chapter xxxviii specifies the manner in which four Barons, chosen out of the twenty-five, shall notify any grievance, and petition to have it redressed without delay:—"And if it is not redressed by us (the King), or if we should happen to be out of the realm, if it is not redressed by our Justiciary within forty days, &c., the four Barons aforesaid shall lay the cause before the rest of the twenty-five Barons, and the said twenty-five Barons, *together with the community of the whole kingdom* shall distrain and distress us all the ways possible; namely, by seizing our castles, lands, possessions, &c."

But though the Tories should remain in office the Irish State Church cannot be saved. Yes, the doom of that fatted harlot is sounded. Nothing on the Earth, or under the Earth, or around and above the Earth can avert the destruction which now threatens her. The sword of Justice which is to sever her unholy connexion with the State is drawn from the scabbard in which it has reposed and rusted too long. It has been burnished and sharpened, and is now grasped by the hilt by a hand which has all the force of the mightiest people in the world concentrated in its strength. Is the Established Protestant Church,—the Church of the principal Land-Lords and of about half a million of people, forced upon five millions of Roman Catholics,—a grievance at all? I contend that the moment any institution, never mind whether it be the most exalted or the humblest in the land, is proven to be obnoxious to the welfare of the community, it ought to be immediately uprooted and annihilated. Why should ages pass away before condemned nuisances are abolished, and acknowledged grievances repealed? Why should generations be subjected to the malign influences of admitted evils when those evils can be instantaneously removed? The Church of the parsons without congregations,—of the Land-Lords without bowels of compassion,—of



conquerors, whose Statesmanship is extermination,—is doomed to death. The days of sectarian ascendancy, religious intolerance, and spurious Protestantism are over in Ireland, and we are even now on the threshold of a new political era, which is to usher in peace and freedom, education and prosperity for one of the most gifted and most cruelly-treated races of mankind. But the condemned criminal will die hard. The ecclesiastical strumpet has numerous powerful friends. She has both the will and the power to bribe and corrupt. We must, therefore, take care lest the officers of Justice should be tampered with. We must be on our guard against a sham death; for the down-trodden of Ireland, England, and Scotland are vitally interested in the complete and final destruction of the Church of Mammon, which has prostituted the religion of Christ into an engine of aristocratic tyranny and working-class misery. The Irish State Church clergy, who are, and always have been, the apologists and tools of the Irish Land-Lords, must no longer be paid out of the land which they helped to depopulate, or out of the industry which they endeavored to starve. This is the Church of the rich, maintained at the expense of the poor,—the Church of alien oppressors and absentee Land-Lords, maintained out of the industry of a poor half-famished, and despised people. Nine out of every ten Irishmen, hate this Church as a vehicle of heresy and a symbol of slavery. Therefore, this Church of the Land-Lords, the sluggards, and the horse-leeches of Irish labor must and shall be speedily abolished, as the first step towards the discharge of that immense debt which England owes to Ireland for seven hundred years of unparalleled oppression. This is the hour. Down with the Irish State Church! Down with the ecclesiastic harlot kept by the Irish Land-Lords, but paid for by the Irish people! England owes an immense debt to Ireland, and, as a first instalment, the Parliament will make the Irish people a present of the extorted endowments of the Irish State Church, subject to the salaries for life of the present incumbents.

With the expectation that I shall have the pleasure of finding you in your proper place in the new Ministry,

I am, dear Sir, &c., &c.,

JOHN SCOTT.

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## LETTER XVI.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
April 7th, 1868.

The Right Hon. B. DISRAELI, Prime  
Minister of Britain.

DEAR SIR,—You are, indeed, unquestionably one of the most curious and versatile Political Reformers of your time. You have taken up many parts, and you have made some sensation in them all. You have been a political novelist and pamphleteer, an epic poet, a Revolutionary Reformer, an advocate for the Ballot, and for the separation of Church and State, a Free Trader, a Protectionist, the sycophant and then the sarcastic assailant of SIR ROBERT PEEL, then a Free Trader once more, the *protégé* of JOSEPH HUME, and the head of the Tory party. All this, and much more, you have been. But all this was not nearly



sufficient for you, who happens to be, certainly, one of our most protean of politicians. So we now find you, in the sear and yellow leaf of your very curious and wonderful career, taking up a new, and, in many respects, the most arduous *role* in which you have ever attempted to amuse or humbug your patrons and admirers. Your new *role* is that of "Defender of the Faith." The first Defender of the Faith was HENRY the Eighth; you are the last or the latest. HENRY the Eighth, with the aid of Sir THOMAS MORE, wrote a book against MARTIN LUTHER and the "Reformation." The POPE was so pleased with this treatise, that he bestowed the high and sacred title of Defender of the Faith upon its supposed author. But the POPE failed to foresee that HENRY in a very short time, would become one of the deadliest enemies of that Church which he had volunteered to champion. Your title to the appellation bestowed by the POPE upon the sacrilegious despoiler of the abbey lands, consists in a fierce No-Popery letter which you wrote to an obscure artificial noble of Tory politics, a speech which you delivered during the discussion of Mr. GLADSTONE'S Resolutions and of another letter which you wrote to a Buckinghamshire parson, who took the liberty of asking you what you meant by saying that "the High Church Ritualists had long been in secret combination, and were now in open confederacy with Irish Romanists, for the destruction of the union between Church and State." You replied to this letter; but the reverend parson must be quite as much at a loss to know your meaning after perusing your reply, as he was before. In fact, you eat up your own words, or, which is the same thing, you explain them away in such a manner as to deprive them of any meaning. The fact is, that, no one knows where to find the new Defender of the Faith. A man may paint the chameleon, the borealis lights, catch and imprison Proteus himself; but no human ingenuity can hold you to your pledges or assertions, or attach any definite meaning to the language which you use, in the event of your finding it convenient to forget that you ever did use it. It may be that, under the influence of the *spiritual* or other stimulants, you did declare that the High Church Ritualists and Roman Catholics were in league to destroy the connexion between Church and State. Since then, however, you have had time to cool down to a more natural and less intemperate view of the subject. Upon second thoughts, you came to the conclusion that the High Church party was very influential, and that there could not well be a more foolish policy than that which would offend them. You, therefore, in your letter to Mr. BAKER, the Buckinghamshire parson, who asked you for an explanation of your views, declare that you have the highest respect for "the High Church party." "I believe," you continue, "there is no body of men in this country to which we have been more indebted, from the days of Queen ANNE to the days of Queen VICTORIA, for the maintenance of the orthodox faith." Here we mark the zeal and the piety of the new Defender of the Faith. Your letter itself is dated "Maundy-Thursday," 1868,\*—a cunning compliance with the customs of the High Churchmen which ought to go a long way towards the

\* Maundy-Thursday,—the Thursday before Easter,—from the *maunds* or baskets that contained the gifts which the King was accustomed to distribute among a certain number of poor persons on that day,—or from the new and great (*mandate*) commandment which JESUS CHRIST gave on that day,—namely, "That we should love one another."



allaying or their resentment, although you have charged them with being parties to a wicked conspiracy against the liberties of their countrymen. Then you compliment them upon having maintained the "orthodox faith." Doubtless you are a capital judge of orthodoxy; and there can be no doubt that the man who insinuates in his life of Lord GEORGE BENTINCK that Christians are as much indebted for their redemption to JUDAS as to JESUS,—to the traitor as well as to the Crucified One,—is an eminently fit and proper person to compliment a great pious party upon their solemn services to the cause of Christianity. It is a particularly lucky thing for you that the days of coarse vituperation are past, or you would be accused in the bluntest manner of deliberately falsifying history when you make assertions of this kind respecting the maintenance of the orthodox faith. The High Church party were notorious in Queen ANNE's time, and afterwards for the violence with which they always attacked the principles of the Revolution.

Having buttered, and, as you doubtless believe, appeased the anger of the High Church party, as new Defender of the Faith, you go on to inform the Rev. Mr. BAKER, of Addington, Bucks, as to what you meant when you spoke of "the extreme faction in the Church that do not conceal their ambition to destroy the connexion between Church and State. Now, you know well that the phrase "extreme faction" is extremely vague. It may apply to High Church, or to Low Church, or to Broad Church, or to Narrow Church; and, therefore, taken without its connexion with your speech on Mr. GLADSTONE's Resolutions, it cannot give offence to any of the parties into which the religious society called the Established Church is divided. You are quite right in complimenting the High Church, and you would be equally right in complimenting the Low Church. Indeed, you do in this very letter, hand a large slice of your rhetorical butter to the Low Church party. For Low Churchmen as well as High Churchmen have votes, and can contribute to the making or to the marring of a Cabinet. But what do you care for either High Church or Low Church, though in your present difficult part of Defender of the Faith you are prepared to pander to the basest of sectarian prejudices, and to inflame the most fiendish animosities, provided that by so doing you can maintain your own place, and defeat Mr. GLADSTONE? The Church of England, however, will do well to be on its guard against its new Defender. You are, no doubt, a sincere believer in the Thirty-nine Articles; but all these, when weighed against the highest office under the Crown, run the risk of having to kick the beam. It must have been for the very silliest of the stupid party that your late farrago of falsehood and sham patriotism has been stuck together. It was perfectly absurd for you to pretend that you had "reason to believe" that such combinations and plots as you described had any existence beyond the bounds of your own fertile imagination, or beyond the words in which your paltry concoctions were put forth. A party in the Church, no doubt, would like to possess the revenues and the power of the Establishment without any State control; but that such a party is in alliance with Roman Catholic priests, is a mere fiction, and one that might have been thought too silly for an expert novelist to invent if days of dotage had not supervened. Most people would gladly treat your unworthy pranks with simple laughter at their mountebank character, but things which might have been passed over



while you were fighting your way to the Premiership, become serious offences when committed under the full responsibilities of position and power. You may disgrace yourself as much as you please with the harlequin changes of your histrionic career. I am sorry that you have no higher ambition, no keener sense of duty, or even better taste, but your personal reputation is your own affair. As Premier, however, you have duties to the Empire,—and you are not entitled to discredit the office of First Minister of the Crown by mingling charlatanry and chicanery in order to make up a policy which it passes the power of ridicule to laugh at, or of scorn sufficiently to despise.

Sincere men may fancy that disestablishing the Irish Church ought to be resisted on the ground that such action would place the English Establishment in peril, but they forget with you that there is something higher and more sacred than the position of any Establishment, and that is Justice and Truth. The real ground for objecting to the Irish Church as it stands is, that it violates all principles of civil and political liberty. I yield to none in disapproval of what I deem to be defects in Roman Catholicism, but if Protestants are to overcome them, they must employ weapons worthy of their cause. To rob a Nation of Roman Catholics in support of a Church they detest, is an action that can have no support from morality, or from true political principles of any kind. To remove so flagrant an outrage and grievance is a duty which Churchmen may feel as well as Dissenters, and in which the best friends of the English Establishment may cordially join. The bishops and clergy of the English Church must determine by their conduct at this crisis whether their hold over public opinion is to be strengthened or weakened. The popular mind is thoroughly made up on the question, and to raise cries that the Church is in danger when nobody thinks of assailing it, is the way to promote an antagonism which ecclesiastics, in common prudence, ought to avoid. If we look a little backward in our history, we shall find that when the Church has really been in danger, it has come from the sort of action which you are now apparently so very anxious to stimulate. When a large proportion of the Bishops and clergy,—the High Church party, which you commend,—made a desperate and deliberate onslaught upon civil and religious liberty; when damaging doctrines of slavish obedience were declared from the pulpit, affirmed in Convocation, and supported by Bishops in Parliament; when ecclesiastical intolerance made bitter war against dissent, and urged mobs to attack the houses of Dissenters, and burn their chapels, a counter movement very naturally appeared, and the Church Establishment was assailed by enemies who avowed their desire to pull it down. Of late years these quarrels have subsided. Churchmen and Dissenters have been willing to recognize each other's merits, and the position of the Establishment has been materially strengthened by the progress of liberality within it as well as without. You invite the Church to a suicidal course. Is this one of your deep designs? You would place it in distinct opposition to the will of the majority and to the tendencies of the age. That you will find adherents I do not doubt; but the more intelligent of the clergy,—I mean those who can most completely throw aside ecclesiastical prejudices, and take a calm view of the situation,—will not, for any ulterior consideration, support a palpable and obvious wrong. In a free country, all institutions, whether civil or ecclesiastical, must rest upon opinion. The Church cannot be in danger so long as the people feel



that it is a useful institution fairly expressing their average belief, and doing its duty as a religious Society. Any attempt to give it a fictitious strength by appeals to Coronation Oaths, Acts of Parliament, and long established custom, must be a mistake at a time when popular principles are in the ascendant, and when merit, and not prescription, will be regarded as the true test by which all things are to be judged.

Your conduct places the House of Commons in a position of grave responsibility. The Liberals cannot honestly allow a Government to continue in office upon the principles you have laid down. If you had merely avoided present action or immediate decision on the Irish Church question, there would have been no special ground for attack ; but an attempt to rule the country upon the High Church principles of Queen ANNE's time is an insult as well as an absurdity. Of course, it will fail, because Natural Laws are against it. You might as well try to bring back the Megatherium as to revive the extinct politics you profess to believe in ; but, in common decency, Parliament cannot allow the attempt to be made, and I should fancy that some of your party,—Lord STANLEY, for example, and those that may be led by the new Marquis of SALISBURY,—will not permit themselves to be the ignominious victims of your clumsy conjuring attempts. There is some gossip afloat about your having led the QUEEN to be afraid that her Coronation Oath binds her to sustain the Irish Church ; but it would be quite contrary to the whole spirit of her Majesty's career to allow such illogical conclusions and insane scruples of this sort to stand for a single moment between the Crown and the people. The Queen has never been the pupil of fanatical Protestants. So far as her theological views are known, they incline in a more liberal direction ; and whether or not she looks with anxiety at the sturdy development of democratic ideas, she is too wise to place herself in a false position, and to exhibit limited monarchy in an unfavorable light just when it is most desirable to show its perfect adaptation to an improved Constitution and to an extension of popular power. It is said that you do not intend to go out of office, if, as must be the case, you are again defeated on the Irish Church question. It is advisable, I admit, that you should be made to finish the Reform Bill before you are turned adrift, but it is not desirable that you should hold office for the purpose of exercising patronage, enjoying emoluments, and influencing the course of the general elections which ought to take place as soon as possible.

At the very commencement, this discussion brought you and your Government into disgrace ; it shattered the reputation of Lord STANLEY, who displayed a shuffling evasive spirit below the dignity of a Statesman, and beneath the honor of a public man, and placed your great rival Mr. GLADSTONE in a higher position than he ever attained before. Either the Irish Church Establishment ought to be defended upon the ground of its merits and utility, or condemned as an apparatus which fails both theologically and politically to realize a beneficial result. You who never had any high sense of political honor or veracity, shouted a cry in which no one supposed you sincere. Lord STANLEY carefully abstained from following his chief in this part of the warfare, and framed an amendment to shuffle off a decision without pledging himself to uphold the Irish Church on future occasions. Such conduct on the part of the chief of the Cabinet and his principal assistant disgusts honest men on both sides. You are frequently accustomed to make



very light of grave difficulties from which ordinary Politicians carefully shrink. You have never stuck at common trifles during your long political career. For you, however, of all public men, to undertake to defend the Irish State Church, is the boldest, and, I must add, the most unscrupulous of your many bold and unscrupulous proceedings. You have yourself been the most bitter of all the assailants of this Establishment. You have said more against it than Mr. GLADSTONE ever did. You do not deny that you deliberately declared it to be an alien Church, and that you also maintained, only a few months before you became one of the Leaders of the Tory party, the duty of British Statesmen to be, to effect in Ireland by legislation all that a revolution would effect by force. It is a very small excuse that all this was said some thirty-four years ago. You were then a man of mature years. You had been in Parliament several Sessions; and long before you entered Parliament you had, as your writings show, been considering Irish questions. You were, when you made these emphatic enunciations, avowedly teaching a younger generation whom you did not wish to be altogether demoralized by the temporizing expedients of such Statesmen as Lord ABERDEEN, Sir JAMES GRAHAM, and Sir ROBERT PEEL. More than this. When lately reminded of the remarks you had made in former days on this question, though you declared that they were somewhat rhetorically conceived and expressed, you did not repudiate them, but acknowledged on your "historical conscience" that they were substantially true. In all your speeches and writings for more than a generation you had steadily maintained that the Roman Catholics were the natural allies of the Tory party, and that it was the height of folly and a proof of short-sightedness,—in men who called themselves Conservative Statesmen, to drive into the opposite ranks a great body of people by principles so thoroughly Conservative. For years after years, both in and out of Parliament,—in season as well as out of season,—you have been coquetting for the support of the Irish Roman Catholic Members. You did so when, with your late friend Lord GEORGE BENTINCK, you first took your seat on the front Opposition bench. You did so even this Session just after you became Prime Minister of Britain. You made a very bold and barefaced bid for their support, indeed, by proposing to Charter and Endow the Catholic University, and by hinting,—though rather obscurely,—at some extensive schemes for raising the status of the Catholic Clergy, only requiring some time to consider and mature. Such are your acknowledged antecedents, though you are now constrained by party exigencies to oppose the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish State Church. No person of ordinary intelligence can doubt, that if you were allowed to act on your own individual convictions you would have cordially supported Mr. GLADSTONE's great propositions. Your party have, however, tied you hand and foot to the stake. You must fight on this ground. It is the one condition of the allegiance of your Tory followers. Never was any man calling himself a Statesman placed in a more humiliating,—in a more unenviable position. You have deliberately shut your eyes to the inevitable events of the future. But you are not a man to hesitate at any course of political conduct if only you can be in name the Leader of a party. This has always been the one prevailing object of your insatiable ambition. To the majority of our public men the nefarious work which you have undertaken this Session



would, indeed, be more horrifying than any form of punishment imaginable. No place nor pension that either Monarchs, Senates, or Governments could bestow, would be to conscientious men comparable to sacrificing the most deliberately expressed convictions,—and especially at the present great political crisis,—with the momentous interests of this great Empire at stake,—elaborately endeavoring to make the worse appear the better cause. This task, however, you have undertaken, and I have no doubt you will continue to perform it in your own peculiar fashion. As far as the Session has gone, you have been equal to each occasion,—that is, you have been thoroughly yourself. But you have not as yet, even with all your arrogant audacity, once presumed to maintain or argue that the Irish State Church is a good or a gracious institution as it now stands. Early impressions are generally lasting impressions. Intelligence and wisdom are needed by all men in all circumstances. Wisdom is needed to avert unnecessary evils; it is needed to sustain the Statesman under unavoidable trials,—to make proper allowance for the feelings and principles of others,—and, finally, wisdom to promote required reforms,—the reforms and improvements which the progress of knowledge point out as necessary.

If you can think that the repudiation of your recent conduct can proceed only from opponents and enemies you have more to learn respecting humanity in general; and you have also much more to learn respecting yourself. For the reproach has been often uttered lately, and is widely believed true, that you are sorely afflicted with extreme selfishness,—with a shameless love of office,—that your main maxim is to secure your own interests; and men whose principles rise up against the dogma that exclusive self-interest can be the true or rightful spring of high official life, condemn you everywhere. Is not deep reproach inseparable from that course of conduct which you have pursued since you became Prime Minister of Britain? Let arguments in defence of your political actions be refined to the utmost, the pollution of extreme selfishness cannot be purged from your late deeds. Men of clear observation will still say, that your political playing is but a cunning form of self-seeking, and not high-toned Statesmanship, that it despoils office of its prerogative, and quenches in deep and gloomy darkness the national confidence,—the developing and securing of which should be the constant aim of public men. Your absurd elocution and ridiculous rhetoric on the occasion of the recent Irish Church debate suggested very general doubts as to the source of your excitement on that remarkable occasion, though, of course, it was only an instance of vanity intoxicated by success. You have not resigned. Defeated on the Irish Church question by a large majority (60), you nevertheless remain Premier.\* It is not your

\* The following is a summary of some of the vital party divisions of the last 30 years:—On August 24, 1841, a vote of want of confidence in Lord Melbourne's Government was carried by 91 in a house of 634 members; on June 8, 1846, Sir Robert Peel's Ministry was defeated by a majority of 76 in a house of 516 members; on February 20, 1851, Lord John Russell tendered his resignation on being defeated by a majority of 48 in a house of 157 members. Twelve months later Lord John Russell was defeated, on the militia question, by 11 in a house of 226 members. The Tory Budget of 1852 was rejected by 19 in a house numbering 596. Lord Aberdeen's Government was driven from power in January, 1855, by a majority of 157 in a house of 458. In March, 1857, Lord Palmerston's Chinese policy was condemned by a majority of 16 in a house of 515 members. A year later there was an adverse



intention to abandon your post, neither will you dissolve Parliament. You will renew and protract the battle of the Irish Church Establishment after the holidays, and go to the country at the end of the Session, when a General Election must necessarily take place under the New Reform Acts. What hope you entertain of winning a majority at the hustings I cannot conceive, unless it arises from an expectation dictated by the desire, that the Protestantism of the whole Nation will be alarmed and interpose between you and your political rivals. No one, however, can know better than yourself that, to use plain terms, the British people will not stand any more trifling. The Nation appears determined that a series of important questions shall be at last lifted out of the slough of talk into the atmosphere of action. Such is the feeling of the Liberals, and especially of the Statesmen who are charged with these great questions. The Nation is now more anxious about measures than about men.

In concluding this, my last letter to you for the present, I seriously recommend to you to study the questions,—What is the pervading spirit, and what are the dominant tendencies of our age? What are its political means, and whither its political mission? In the careful investigation of these questions, you will soon discover that it is an age of freedom both in thought and action,—that it is an age in which men are being liberated from the despotism of forms based on suppositions, from the serfdom of caste, from the authority of prelates and priests, and from the tyranny of Kings, Queens, and every other grade of State Idols;—that it is an age of Intellect, in which the spirit of discovery speeds with eagle wings from province to province of Scientific investigation;—an age in which history is exhuming the long buried records of Empires and Races, called by her Scientific labors as from the depths of death unto the heights of life;—an age in which the slowly accumulated mental treasures of all ages,—humanity's priceless heirloom from the total past,—so long in the possession only of a small though learned class of professed students,—is becoming the possession of universal man;—that it is pre-eminently an age in which Human Rights are claimed and legally granted, independently of birth, rank, prestige, or precedent; an age in which invidious artificial distinctions and special privileges are being rapidly lost in the growing conviction that a natural brotherhood should unite all races of mankind into one great harmonious family, with love, not force, as their bond of union, and emulation, not coercion, as their stimulus to useful exertion.

I am, dear Sir, for the present released from my self-imposed task of being your special Teacher in the Science and Art of Politics,

JOHN SCOTT.

majority of 19 on the Conspiracy Bill in a house of 454. The Tory Reform Bill of 1859 was rejected by 39 in a house of 626; two months later the second Derby Government was ejected by a majority of 13 in a house of 638 members. On July 9, 1864, Lord Palmerston triumphed over the Opposition on the Danish question by a majority of 18 in a house of 613. On April 29, 1866, Lord Russell's Reform Bill was carried by a majority of 5 in a house of 636. On June 18, 1866, the Russell Government was, however, defeated by a majority of 11 in a house numbering 624. Last year the Opposition had not effectually "reconciled its sections"; but on April 4, of this year (1868) it obtained a majority of 60 over the Tory Administration on the Irish Church question.



## LETTER XVII.

BELFAST, 59, VICTORIA TERRACE,  
April 27th, 1868.

JOHN S. MILL, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR,—We are assured, on excellent authority, that Justice, being great, shall ultimately triumph. It is to be hoped such is the case; but no one can deny that frequently a very long time elapses before Justice does make itself fully known and felt. In this country, as regards both political and social matters, the sunshine of Justice finds it extremely difficult to disperse the murky fog of prejudice and conventionalism. Before the rankest weed of corruption can be uprooted, the public mind requires being *educated and prepared for the operation years and years before it takes place*. And even when the entire Nation is convinced that some huge fraud and deceit has been practised upon them for ages, considerable time is required to reconcile the people to the subversion and extinction of the fraud. Such being the case, then, it is by no means surprising that those who advocate great and startling political and social changes are at first sneered and laughed at, until, little by little, the public mind becoming enlightened on the subject it never before thought worthy of consideration, tardily admits that the plans and projects of the Reformers are neither so visionary nor so impracticable as they at first appeared. At the present day it is the fashion to laugh at you and others who advocate the enfranchisement of females, and the proposal is a subject for badinage, in what is termed "*Good Society*;" and when brought before Parliament again will assuredly be laughed at in the House of the Common men. Nevertheless, if your philosophy has not led you into a quagmire, and if Justice does, as I before said, ultimately triumph,—if, in short, it be proper, politic, and just, that women should enjoy the full rights of free citizenship,—why, then, rest assured Mr. MILL, that before many years have elapsed they will become an avowed power in the State.

The battle of the Irish Church will commence in the House of the Common men this evening, and a fierce and prolonged fight may be confidently expected. In all legislative assemblies, an appeal to numbers decides every question. 330 members, opposed to 270, decided that they should open the Irish Church question;—that they would "go into committee." The same majority will probably decide that "it is expedient that the Irish Church be disestablished," unless a lavish distribution of the "*secret service money*" and the promised patronage and bribery of Peers have reversed the intentions of many needy and struggling members; for so long as the necessary expenses of elections are what they now are, and so long as Members of Parliament are not paid for their services, the "*secret service money*" and certain members of the House of the Lords can marshal a given number of the members of the House of the Common men.

On this important point Reformers are culpably silent. There is hardly a voice raised in favor of the payment of those men who do the most important work of the State. Now, it stands in conformity with Justice that a Member of Parliament is as much entitled to payment for his labor as any other useful workman. But even honest Reformers shirk this most important question as if there was something in the idea of a Member of Parliament being paid for his services to be ashamed of. Yet no one thinks it shameful in a Judge or a Prime Minister, or a "Prince of the Blood," being paid. Every officer in the Queen's household is paid out of the pockets of the working classes; yet the working classes are led to believe that their own



representatives ought not to be paid. No one thinks of serving the Sovereign or the aristocracy for nothing. To do these justice, they do not ask or expect that they should be served gratuitously. But the poor, silly, befooled taxpaying classes have been taught to worship State Idols, and to consider that *noble Lords* and rich men deem it a peculiar pleasure, and a very special honor to serve them,—the unwashed, unperfumed, multitude,—for nothing,—by way of gratitude. But do they do it? Most certainly not. This supposed non-payment of members is a manifest falsehood,—a malignant deception. As a matter of fact, Members of Parliament are paid, not honestly and avowedly, but in a secret, and frequently dirty and dishonest way. Many of them are notoriously poor. Yet, inasmuch as they do the dirty work of the aristocracy, they are paid by being appointed to places in which, though the salary is good, the labor is light or next to nothing. Others, again, are paid by being appointed to sham “*Commissions*” purporting to elucidate a subject preliminary to its being legislated upon. But generally these long, tedious and costly inquiries leave the subject of their investigations in a greater muddle and mystery than it was before.

In addition to these indirect modes of paying Members of Parliament, there is the “*Secret service money*,” which the House of the Common men votes so readily every year, and which finds its way into the pockets of some of the unpaid and incorruptible gentlemen who do the work of the aristocracy. The fact is, that the people never will be masters of their own pockets until they are represented in the House of the Common men by honest and properly paid servants. From these considerations, I hope that you will agree with me that Parliamentary Reform, so far from being finished, has, in the true signification of the term, hardly yet been commenced.

With the fond expectation that you may be disposed to favor me with your view of the payment of Members, as also with your intention to move for the enfranchisement of our fair sisters, and sincerely hoping that you shall find your proper place in the first new Ministry,

I am, dear Sir, yours very cordially in the cause of human progression,  
JOHN SCOTT.

[The following is Mr. MILL's reply to the above letter]:—

BLACKHEATH PARK, KENT, *April 30, 1868.*

DEAR SIR,—There is much truth in many of the observations in your letter of the 27th instant, but, as at present advised, I am not in favor of the payment of Members of Parliament by a salary from the State. If the remuneration were of sufficient amount to be any object to persons capable of earning a considerable income by their abilities, it would be high enough to be a great temptation to a large class of persons as a mere pecuniary speculation; and it seems to me inexpedient to add anything to the strong motives which already prompt men to seek for a seat in the Legislature as a means of personal profit.

It is, no doubt, a great evil that highly qualified persons should be prevented from serving their country in Parliament by the want of an independent income, and I think that when this is known to be the case with a person whom any body of electors are anxious to choose as their representative, it would be equally honorable to him and to them that they should subscribe to make an income for him during the years which they ask him to devote to their service.

I am happy to hear that you are in favor of the extension of the Suffrage to women.—I am, dear Sir, very sincerely yours,

JOHN SCOTT, Esq.

J. S. MILL.



## GENERAL CONCLUDING REMARKS, EMBRACING THE MEANS AND THE MODES OF OUR POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.

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THE state of society throughout the civilized world, but especially in Britain, at this period of the nineteenth century, must often and deeply engage the attention of thoughtful minds, and would form a most interesting subject of inquiry and discussion in the hands of one favorably endowed and placed, both for viewing life in its various aspects and for entering on the investigation, in that calm, careful, and wise manner which should enable him to take a just view of its political state, social and domestic relations, apart from his own immediate connexion with them. Such a view would be retrospective also ; for it would involve a history of progress ; and it would be most interesting to trace the influence of political events and popular commotions,—of commercial transactions,—and of scientific discoveries,—and especially of moral and educational movements, on the social and domestic manners and habits of the present age. The subject accordingly has not been altogether neglected ; many lively remarks and profound views connected with it are to be found in the writings of modern essayists, politicians, poets, and historians ; while in some of the popular works of fiction we have lively and often faithful impressions taken off, from the prominent features of our age, with respect to its political, social, and domestic condition, and bold sketches made of the scenes and circumstances in which its faults and follies, its intelligence and virtues, stand out on the surface of life. Nor has the subject been left to grave inquiry or to fictitious narrative only ; our sense of the ludicrous is enlisted every week, by both pencil and pen, for the special purpose of stimulating and directing attention to the passing scenes of life,—to its selfishness and whims, to its follies and inconsistencies, as they shift and show themselves in our rapidly-advancing course of political progress. Still, as a whole, the subject remains almost untouched. And there is one portion, or rather one particular view of that whole, which involves much importance, and which may be brought before us by means of the following questions :—What are the duties and the defects of political, social, and domestic life among us ? In other words, how do we act out the great liberal and just principles by which we profess to be governed ? Do we thoroughly comprehend the duties and defects of political, social, and domestic life in our own Nation and age ? The coloring of our false virtues tarnish our real ones. Polite manners are substituted by us for real duties ; fine liberal sentiments for good actions. The benefits, the duties, and the dangers of modern political and social life, arise chiefly out of the increased power which men possess of acting on each other for good or for evil. In past ages, men influenced each other chiefly through the medium of wealth, social station, artificial rank, backed up and supported by physical force ; but in the course of our progress into the present period of our civilization, new sources of influence have been developed, through circumstances which have brought each class of society into contact, and so facilitated personal and mental intercourse, as to have established a *Free Trade in Knowledge, Appreciations, and Opinions*, between the different grades of society. The same circumstances have developed and cherished the natural tendency in man to combine for particular purposes,—a tendency which was formerly called into action with difficulty, and only by urgent circumstances, but when exerted, was ever a powerful engine for the attainment of the most important ends.



The means of influencing society are, indeed, through the general and rapid diffusion of knowledge, new appreciations, and feelings, almost unlimited at the present day. Opinions, facts, and discoveries, which formerly enlightened and influenced small local societies only, or that slowly made their way through individual minds scattered over the world at large, and holding little communication with each other, are now carried with inconceivable rapidity from one end of the globe to the other,—moving and acting on large bodies of men wholly unconnected by position or circumstances,—acting on popular Representatives and official Leaders, in proportion as they are susceptible of being impressed with true convictions. A political movement, a new thought, a just demand emanating from some one great social center, as from London, for instance, and arising probably in the mind of some solitary individual, is transmitted in a few hours to numerous localities over the wide extent of our home Empire, and in a few more hours, days, weeks, or months, to foreign and distant shores. Education, printing, postage, steam, electricity, mechanism, developed mind, all lend their aid to multiply and promote the rapid circulation of thought. An idea, or principle, a scientific discovery, a mechanical or chemical improvement, or a matter of fact, is transmitted over-night to the public journals, and the following morning has communicated itself to thousands of minds, whose intellectual faculties and moral energies are simultaneously aroused and stimulated by its influence. The impression actually *left* on each mind in this way is not, however, permanent, nor is society at large moved by it, unless it is renewed often enough to make a lodgment, and to impart that conviction of general sympathy which alone encourages us to action, or unless the latent spark so communicated should happen to light upon some mind capable both of disengaging it, and of kindling with the flame thus caught, the minds of others. To both these modes of influencing society, the cheapness, ease, and continuousness of literary communication greatly contribute. Day after day, year after year, the same idea, principle, or demand is presented to the mind, by means of public journals, reviews, and other notices, until it has become diffused among millions of individual minds, and having gradually mixed itself up with their thoughts, appreciations, feelings, and interests, is appropriated as their own, and is at length expressed and recognized as public opinion: or if destined to a more immediate influence, is communicated by the mind which originated, or the kindred intelligence which received it, to some popular assembly,—to the House of the Common men, or to the Chamber of the Lords, where the impression is deepened by sympathy, and the sentiment is transmitted by various means and methods,—with all the increased weight of numbers, to influence similar masses of intelligent beings. Owing to this rapid circulation of thought, the minds of individuals who have no sort of personal connexion are unfolded to each other, and their mutual sources of strength made known, so that a facility of action is afforded to those combinations for particular purposes, which form a remarkable feature of our age. By their means, expression and weight are given to the thoughts and interests of that part of the community who form a minority in point of wealth and artificial power, but very often a majority in point of numbers and intelligence; and thus by the united strength of some small individual means, the rights of every class and grade in society come to be recognized, and their claims forced on the notice of their fellow-men. At an early stage of civilization these combinations seem to have been essential to the preservation of some of the very commonest rights of humanity. Afterwards, when those rights were more generally recognized, the spirit which called them forth slumbered, except when some new and intolerable evil roused the fears and the intelligence of the age to this means of self-protection. Towards the close of the last century combinations were again forced on mankind



to repel evils which were ancient, indeed, but which the growing intelligence of Nations refused any longer to endure. At the present day they are not only a source of political power extending to the lowest ranks, but they form also the fashionable momentum of society. We have combinations for the promotion of political and pious purposes, combinations of persons of rank, social station, and forms of faith, the most different, or even opposed to each other, uniting in one vast object of Justice, and minds long divided, are brought together by the healing influence of common sympathy and the determination to remove sources of oppression,—combinations for charities, for education, for literary and scientific ends, and for everything connected with the public welfare and convenience;—combinations for amusements, and finally, as a cross division, combinations for party purposes and also to promote the selfish ends of particular classes. Such a rapid circulation of thought, and such a connexion with the masses of our fellow-men, seem to involve new and growing responsibilities, and to complicate our duties, inasmuch as they increase, to an almost fearful extent, the social influences of mankind. Bitter and idle words, falsehoods uttered heedlessly, or to serve some private purpose at a public meeting, no longer sink into oblivion, or remain with the circle of hearers to which they were addressed,—they go forth with the speed of steam, or of air, to corrode and embitter, to mislead or deceive, thousands of other minds; when by him probably who uttered them, they are remembered no more. But this is not all; the evil desires, the false impressions, and the bad principles, contained in books, which the expense of publication and the difficulty of transmission formerly confined to a small number of readers, are now diffused among the mass of the population,—among the young, the ignorant, and the idle of mankind. So that in both ways a new responsibility has arisen, and is laid on the speakers and writers,—especially on the popular writers,—of the present day, who thus enter into communication with the public mind, and exert over their fellow-men of every class, age, and degree, a real and powerful influence for good or for evil. And if the relations between mankind at large have been so much extended and strengthened by the various and newly-developed means of communication which the present period of general advancement presents, the habits and manners of social and domestic life have been little less influenced by the same causes. No longer confined to the narrow circle in which we may have been born, or bound through professional or local circumstances by the laws of a particular coterie, our minds have freer intercourse, and are less exposed to the uncontrolled dominion of those prejudices which belong to the sect or party with whom we may happen to be connected. Under these circumstances, we should be led to expect a great improvement in the general tenor of our social and domestic life at the present day; and accordingly, in comparing it with the records, oral and written, even of the early part of this nineteenth century, we do find that a much higher tone of intellectual and moral development prevails among us. Still it is necessary that we should keep the questions in view,—“What are the principal duties and defects of our political, social, and domestic life at the present period? How do we act out the great liberal and just principles by which we profess to be governed”?























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